

VETERANS DAY

HONORING
those who
SERVED

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 2024

THE ORIGINS OF VETERANS DAY

By The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

In 1921, an unknown World War I American soldier was buried in Arlington National Cemetery. This site, on a hillside overlooking the Potomac River and the city of Washington, D.C., became the focal point of reverence for America's veterans.

Similar ceremonies occurred earlier in England and France, where an unknown soldier was buried in each nation's highest place of honor (in England, Westminster Abbey; in France, the Arc de Triomphe). These memorial gestures all took place on Nov. 11, giving universal recognition to the celebrated ending of World War I fighting at 11 a.m., Nov. 11, 1918 (the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month). The day became known as "Armistice Day."

Armistice Day officially received its name in America in 1926 through a Congressional resolution. It became a national holiday 12 years later by similar Congressional action. If the idealistic hope had been realized that World War I was "the War to end all wars," Nov. 11 might still be called Armistice

Day. But only a few years after the holiday was proclaimed, war broke out in Europe. Sixteen and one-half million Americans took part. Four hundred seven thousand of them died in service, more than 292,000 in battle.

ARMISTICE DAY CHANGED TO HONOR ALL VETERANS

The first celebration using the term Veterans Day occurred in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1947. Raymond Weeks, a World War II veteran, organized "National Veterans Day," which included a parade and other festivities, to honor all veterans. The event was held on Nov. 11, then designated Armistice Day. Later, U.S. Representative Edward Rees of Kansas proposed a bill that would change Armistice Day to Veterans Day. In 1954, Congress passed

the bill that President Eisenhower signed proclaiming Nov. 11 as Veterans Day. Raymond Weeks received the Presidential Citizens Medal from President Reagan in Nov. 1982. Weeks' local parade and ceremonies are now an annual event celebrated nationwide.

On Memorial Day 1958, two more unidentified American war dead were brought from overseas and interred in the plaza beside the unknown soldier of World War I. One was killed in World War II, the other in the Korean War. In 1984, an unknown serviceman from the Vietnam War was placed alongside the others. The remains from Vietnam were exhumed May 14, 1998, identified as Air Force 1st Lt. Michael Joseph Blassie, and removed for burial. To honor these men, symbolic of all Americans who gave their lives in all wars, an Army honor guard, the 3rd U.S. Infantry (The Old Guard), keeps day and night vigil.

A law passed in 1968 changed the national commemoration of Veterans Day to the fourth Monday in October. It soon became apparent, however, that Nov. 11 was a date of historic significance to many Americans. Therefore, in

1978 Congress returned the observance to its traditional date.

NATIONAL CEREMONIES HELD AT ARLINGTON NATIONAL CEMETERY

The focal point for official, national ceremonies for Veterans Day continues to be the memorial amphitheater built around the Tomb of the Unknowns. At 11 a.m. on Nov. 11, a combined color guard representing all military services executes "Present Arms" at the tomb. The nation's tribute to its war dead is symbolized by the laying of a presidential wreath. The bugler plays "taps." The rest of the ceremony takes place in the amphitheater. Veterans Day ceremonies at Arlington and elsewhere are coordinated by the President's Veterans Day National Committee. Chaired by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the committee represents national veterans organizations. Governors of many states and U.S. territories appoint Veterans Day chairpersons who, in cooperation with the National Committee and the Department of Defense, arrange and promote local ceremonies.

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Maines on the sideline coaching his team.

LUKE PETERSEN | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Flexibility in the military

Unexpected passion for healthcare shifted to teaching

LILY HUDMAN

Aspiring to be a police officer, Azle High School medical terminology and principles of health science teacher Emily Conger decided to join the military directly after high school as the area in Rhode Island she lived in requires candidates to be at least 21 years of age to become a police officer.

Conger entered the Air Force in 2011 and worked as an aerospace medical technician at the Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio. She worked three years at an inpatient pediatric ward and then worked at an OB/GYN clinic until 2017.

"As a technician, I would check the AED (automated external defibrillator) at the beginning of my shift, and as a lead I would assign patients to other technicians," Conger said. "Daily, I would do things like take vital signs, give IVs, get blood work and help with any procedure that a doctor or nurse was doing."

While in the Air Force, Conger said she got to see a variety of peoples' backgrounds, which taught her lessons she uses today.

"It exposed me to a lot of different people and made me more understanding of people and where they come from," Conger said. "It taught me to be very patient, tolerant and flexible, because you have to be willing to be flexible in the military."

After completing eight-and-a-half weeks of basic training, Conger wanted to be military police, but was instead getting assigned to medical, which she was not interested in.

"It's funny, because when



COURTESY PHOTO

Conger smiles in her uniform.

I was in high school picking my career, I was like the last thing I want to do is be in the medical field, or be a teacher," Conger said. "So, when they told me I was medical, I just thought, 'Oh wow, this will be interesting,' but that's where I got my passion for healthcare."

While it was not what she expected, Conger said it was a great phase of her life and allowed her to gain new experiences.

"I went through the training, and it was hard and really fast-paced, but it was good," Conger said. "I will always recommend that anybody go into the military."

Now, she remembers her commitment to America and the impact she made.

"It's just a remembrance for me because it's like, 'Hey, I did something that was cool and for my country,'" Conger said. "And I always think about my time in the military on Veterans Day and all of the people that I served with and what they're doing today."

Defending America's endzone

LUKE PETERSEN

In the late '90s, amid the ongoing conflict in Iraq, an HH-60 Pave Hawk helicopter performed several combat rescues of injured American soldiers. Manning the chopper was none other than Azle High School's very own social studies teacher, Bo Maines.

Azle coach served in military before taking up new career

"I was stationed at Nellis Air Force Base in Las Vegas," Maines said. "But we were gone all the time, most of the time overseas. We served in northern Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia, Turkey and around those areas."

Maines, who is also the defensive coordinator for the varsity football team, served from 1995-2000 after he graduated from high school and married his wife, Leah.

According to Maines, he had been eager to join the Air Force after he had been working toward it throughout high school.

"I grew up with my uncle and he took me to a lot of air shows," Maines said. "I've just always had an interest in aircraft and knew that I wanted to work on or around them."

Making his way up to the rank of senior airman E-4, Maines said was able to continue to build relationships with not only his fellow airmen but also people from around the globe.

"My unit was over in the Middle East a lot, and all over Europe, so I got to meet a lot of different people and a lot of different cultures," Maines said. "I think it's helped teach me to just be open to everybody and everything and know that there's different lifestyles and opinions, but ultimately, everybody's a good person."

Ultimately, after five years of service, Maines took a step back from the Air Force and went on to pursue his aspirations of teaching and coaching. However, he said the lessons the Air Force taught

him continue to influence his current career.

"I think the camaraderie of being with the guys that were over there during that time, the friends that I made, and the bonds that we made is a lot like football," Maines said. "There are times where it's not fun and it's not glorious and it's not glamorous, but you bond with the people that are sort of commiserating with you in that situation."

Despite Maines leaving the Air Force roughly 24 years ago, he still continues to encourage his students with a passion for serving their country.

"It really is a fun experience if you do it right," Maines said. "I try to talk to kids that are going in now and just give them the best advice on how to get everything out of it for themselves. It's a phenomenal experience and it really is something I would do again."



COURTESY PHOTO

Bo Maines poses for a photo in his Air Force uniform roughly 20 years ago.



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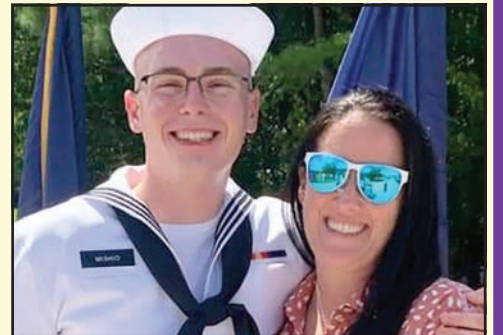
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Ben Mishio (second from right)



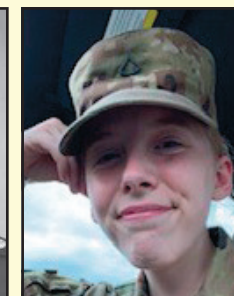
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Ben Mishio



Matt Mishio



Catherine Mishio



Phillip Cole Payne

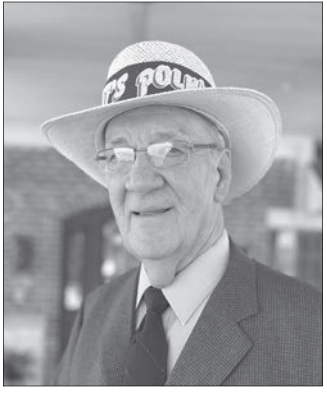
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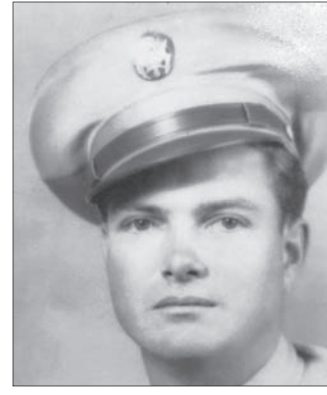
LAWRENCE ADMIRE
U.S. Marine Corps
1952-1954



DANNY CLINT ALLISON
U.S. Marine Corps



STACEY ALMOND
Air Force
1997-2006



BILLIE ALTOM
U.S. Army
1943-1945, Normandy
Invasion



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DAVID AUVENSHINE
U.S. Navy
3 Years, 1996 Azle Graduate



GEORGE AYALA
U.S. Air Force
1976-1982



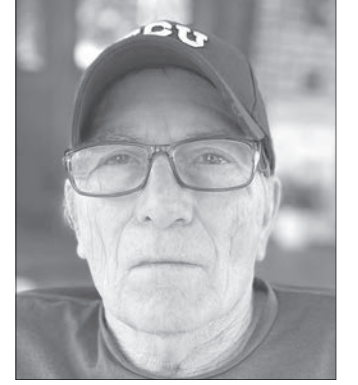
CHRISTOPHER BACHELOR
U.S. Air Force
2005-Present



KEN BACHELOR
U.S. Air Force
1981-2011



WILLIAM BAILEY SHAFER IV
U.S. Navy
1997-2001



BOBBY BAKER
U.S. Army



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U.S. Air Force
1957-1959



BRANDON BARNETT
U.S. Air Force • Staff
Sergeant
2007-2013



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1998-2003



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2006 -



THOMAS 'TOMMY' BEATY
1967- 1970



AARON BEDFORD
U.S. Army
1964-1966



TIM BISHOP
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1972-1977



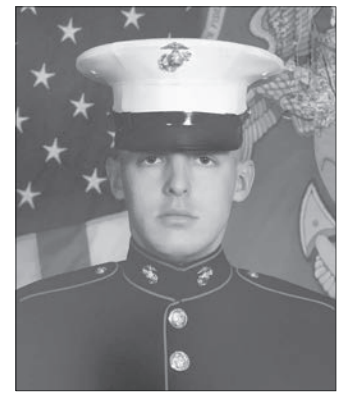
DAVID BLACKWELL
U.S. Navy



SCOTT BOIVIN
U.S. Marine Corps
24 years



TERA BRADSHAW
U.S. Navy



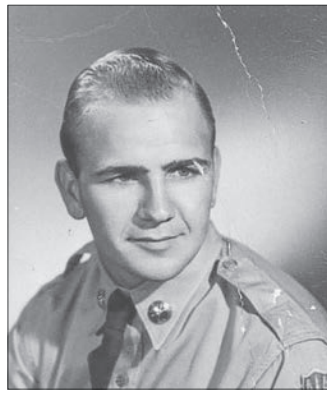
AARON BRAZELL
U.S. Marine Corps
Lance Corporal



VANCE M. BRIDGES
U.S. Air Force Reserves
Lt. Colonel • 29 Years



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U.S. Marines 1967-1970
Active-Duty Reserves
1970-1973



THOMAS BURNS
U.S. Army
1951-1953



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1951-1953



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1979-



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1969-1971



ANNDI COUTURE
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1994-2004



LARRY COWDEN
U.S. Army
1967-1969



JERRY CRAWFORD
U.S. Marine Corps
1967-1969, Vietnam



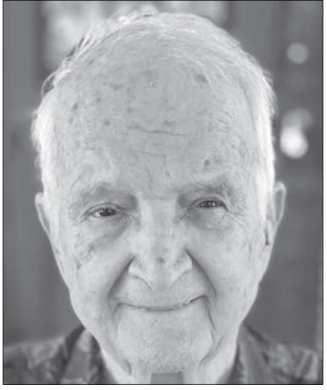
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U.S. Army Air Corps
1943-1946



JERRY DANIEL
U.S. Army
1958-1959



WILLIAM DARNELL
U.S. Air Force • Master
Sergeant
2008-Present



TRUMAN DAVIS
U.S. Air Force



JAMES W. DAVIS
U.S. Air Force • Captain
1967-1972, Vietnam April
1970-April 1971



JESSE DAWSON
U.S. Marine Corps
2005-Present



JESSICA DAWSON
U.S. Army
2004-2009



JOHN DOSS
U.S. Marine Corps • Sergeant
1988-1998



RONALD DOSS
U.S. Air Force
Airman 2nd Class
1954-1957



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Billy Wilson: A life at sea

JOLEE SKINNER

jolee@tricountyreporter.com

LAKE WORTH — Not many people in life get to live on a ship and travel the world for two years straight. But Billy Wilson got to experience that and live life out at sea.

Wilson, born in Comanche in 1934, is a veteran of the Navy Reserve.

Wilson grew up in Comanche, graduated high school there and got a scholarship to run track at Texas A&M in 1954.

But Wilson made a life-altering decision to leave school, leave track and enlist in the Navy, where he served from 1955 to 1957.

Wilson joined the Navy Reserve and was an E5, which is an enlisted rank. Wilson skipped boot camp, boarded a cargo ship in California and sailed to Kingston, Jamaica. Wilson was a ship serviceman who traveled to the Philippines, Hong Kong, Sydney, Australia and many more destinations.

One of Wilson's first jobs involved practicing how fast his unit could get the smaller mag boats off the ship.

"My first job was to let that door down," Wilson said. "At four o'clock in the morning, we practiced how quick we could take the boats off of that ship in the dark. But I never did have to go out with them. What they did during the war, they'd go out and open that door and then they'd go in with the Marines or the Army boys."

On the ship, Wilson had many different jobs and became rather popular with everyone.

"I was the ice cream man, I made ice cream on the ship," Wilson said. "They all knew me because I ran the ship store and made ice cream. And I kept the coat machines going."

Wilson recalls when his ship got to go to Nagasaki, Japan where 10 years earlier the United States dropped the atomic bomb Aug. 9, 1945 — the first use of atom-

ic weapons in war.

Wilson traveled all over Japan on that trip and excitedly said he got to experience something he had never done before. "I got to ride the bullet train and go into Tokyo one time," Wilson said.

Thinking back on his time on the ship, Wilson said the fog made the trips dangerous.

"Those ships, you know, would anchor out in the ocean," Wilson said. "The fog would come in every night and you'd have to take a small boat to get over. You couldn't hardly see in front of you. They rang a little bell. That's how dangerous it was. But we never had an accident."

Wilson said the biggest lesson he learned while being out at sea was to watch out and be careful.

"Well, if you're out at that sea, you better be careful," Wilson said. "That ship was 550 feet long and I've seen it jump out of the water. You know, it's so rough when we



Billy Wilson at the Lake Worth Senior Center.

JOLEE SKINNER | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

had a bad storm. So, you better watch out for that ocean because you never know what's going to happen out there."

After serving in the Navy

Reserve for two years, Wilson was discharged in Seattle, Washington, and started his career as a builder. He married his wife, Charlotte Rose, in 1963 and had three kids.

Wilson went on to build many homes, even some in Lake Worth. Wilson Court, located north of Azle Avenue in Lake Worth, is named after him.



PHOTO COURTESY TERE BRADSHAW

Photos and memorabilia spread around showing Tera Bradshaw's time in the Navy.

Former Navy petty officer turned to education

NOVA WANG

AZLE — Honoring her country and wanting to pursue a degree in college with no debt were reasons that helped Tera Bradshaw make her decision to join the U.S. Navy when she was 18.

Through the GI Bill, Bradshaw was able to pursue her education after her service, leading her to become a teacher at Azle High School after finishing her degree.

"I come from a family of teachers and my major in college was Spanish so that career was my first go-to," Bradshaw said.

AHS teacher speaks about serving in Navy and what she does now

Bradshaw first began her service in 1994 and was on a crew that helped with issues that occurred on the Navy vessel USS McKee (AS-41).

"When I served, I worked as an electrician," Bradshaw said. "I also was ranked as a petty officer third class during my time of service."

Navy electricians typically calibrate, repair and maintain all the electronic equipment that is used in a Navy vessel.

With the duties given to her, Bradshaw believes the Navy truly helped her in different ways, whether it is financially or internally.

"(The Navy) provided the opportunity and funding for me to go to college," Bradshaw said. "And (it) taught me responsibility and discipline, even though I was already disciplined prior because of my dad, who was my coach in high school."

When reflecting on her past service, Bradshaw mentioned her mixed opinions about going into the Navy again if she had the option.

"I'm not really sure the answer, it depends on the society that we live in," Bradshaw said. "The present, is a different society than the one I grew up in. So I'm not really sure if I would do it again."

After Bradshaw left the Navy, she went into education which eventually led her to Azle, where she is still teaching at the high school and has been for over a decade.



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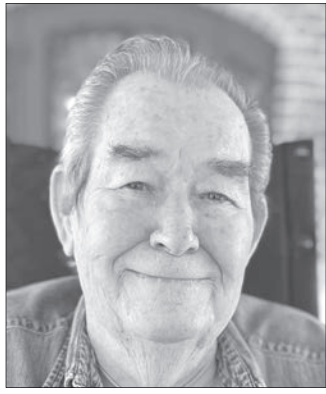
HONORING *those who* SERVED



THOMAS ESTES
U.S. Marine Corps
1966-1970, Vietnam



RENE ESTEVES
U.S. Navy
2003-2008



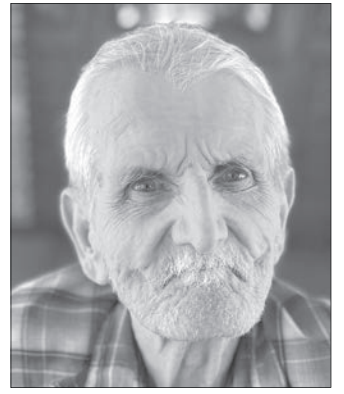
KENNETH FAIR
U.S. Navy E3,
U.S. Air Force E6



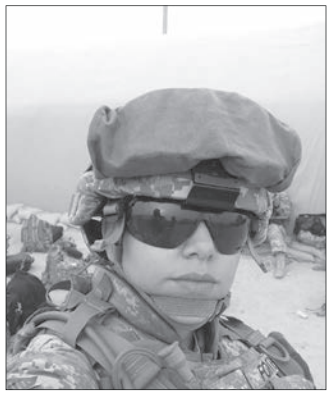
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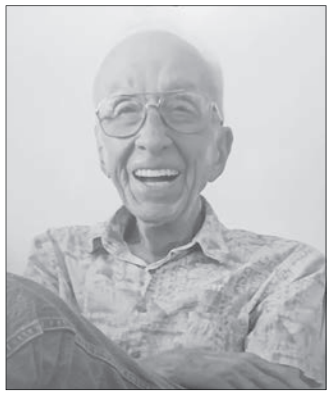
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U.S. Navy Medic E5, U.S.
Army National Guard Medic



JOANNE FONTENOT
U.S. Army 2006-2010
Army National Guard
2010-2012



CHARLES FORETICH
U.S. Air Force
1951-1955, Korea



JARED FOSTER
U.S. Marine Corps
2017 - Present



DONALD FOX
U.S. Army
Specialist 5th Class
1966-1968



STEPHEN FREEMAN
U.S. Marine Corps
2003-2010, Iraq



JOEL FRISKE
U.S. Army
10 Years



LEON FOSTER
U.S. Army Reserves 1988-1993
U.A. Navy 1993-1997



RICK FOSTER
U.S. Army
1967-1972, Vietnam



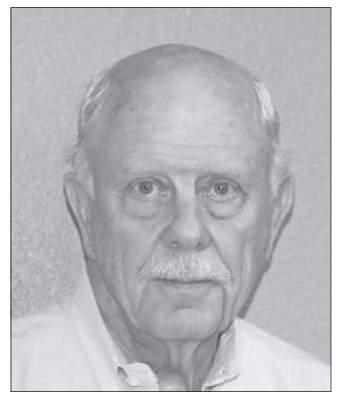
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U.S. Army
1970-1972, Vietnam



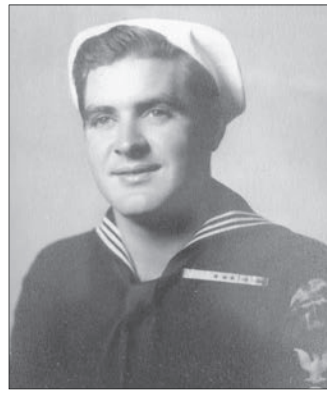
CHRISTOPHER GILLILAND
U.S. Army
1997-2016



GRANT GIBBONS
U.S. Air National Guard
2017-Present



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U.S. Air Force
1981-1989



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U.S. Coast Guard
WWII



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RONNIE GOODE
U.S. Coast Guard
1991-1995



JOE GRANDMASON
U.S. Marine Corps
Sgt 2004-2014
TX Air National Guard
Staff Sergeant 2014-2021
Fort Worth Police Department
Officer 2015-Present



DAN GRANT
U.S. Air Force • E3



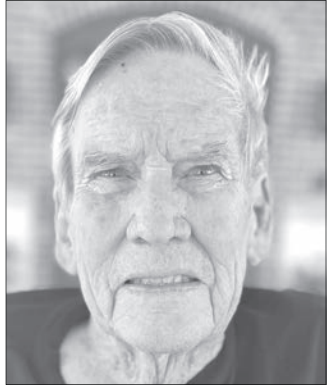
ROBERT M. GUNN
U.S. Air Force 1954-1962
U.S. Navy Reserves 1976-1992



JAMES HACHTEL
Texas Army National Guard
2010-2016



WILLIAM EUGENE HALL
U.S. Army
1950-1952, Korea, Purple
Heart, Bronze Star with Valor



BILLY HAMILTON
U.S. Air Force • Sgt 1st Class



DENNIS HAMBLIN
U.S. Army 864th Engr Bn
1972-1975



MICHAEL HANNA
U.S. Air Force
1979-1983



EILEEN HARBOUR
U.S. Marine Corps
1976-1980, 1975 Azle Graduate



ROBERT BRADY HARTMAN
U.S. Army • 1st 503rd Airborne
Infantry, 173 Airborne Brigade
Medic, Afghanistan
2008-2011



JOHN HINOJOSA
U.S. Army • E4
1988-1992



DANIEL HOLIAN
U.S. Army
5 years



THERESA HOLIAN
U.S. Navy
20 years



JOEY HOLLINGSWORTH
Texas Air National Guard
15 Years



HOWARD HORTON
U.S. Air Force
1952-1968



LEROY HORTON
U.S. Air Force



ROSS HORTON
U.S. Army
1955 - 1957



JACK HORTON
U.S. Army
2 Years, Vietnam



ANDREW HOWARD
1962-1966 A1C Phillipines



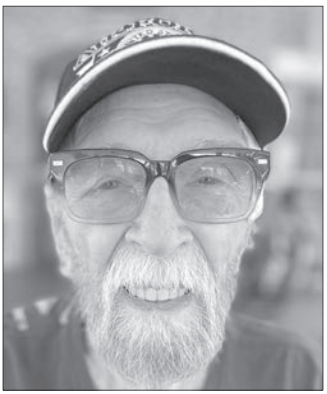
SHIRLEY HUBBARD
U.S. Air Force
Civilian Civil Service
32 Years



AMY HUBENAK
U.S. Marine Corps
4 Years



JEFF HUBENAK
U.S. Navy
26 Years



DON HUGGINS
U.S. Air Force
Airman 2nd Lt



GEORGE HUTTON
U.S. Army
1962-1970, Vietnam



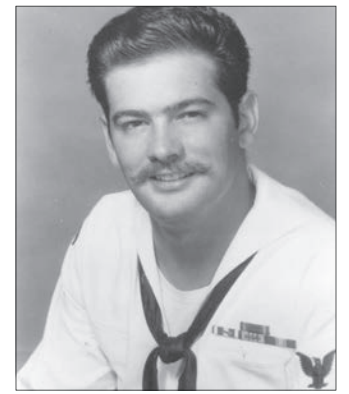
JAMES D. IVEY
U.S. Air Force
1954-1958 • 4 Years



RAY IVEY
U.S. Army • Colonel
30 Years, Vietnam



MATTHEW JACKSON
U.S. Army
2002-2006



EDWARD JANTZEN
U.S. Navy
1966-1969

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Tech Sergeant
1951-1971 • 20 Years



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U.S. Navy
1966-1973, 1966 Azle Graduate



ESTLE JOHNSON
U.S. Air Force • SMSgt
1951-1978



MARY JOHNSON
U.S. Navy
1965-1968



GARY KEIL
U.S. Navy
4 Years, Vietnam



BRIAN KILIAN
U.S. Air Force
1987-2013



STEPHANIE KING
U.S. Air Force
1989-1995



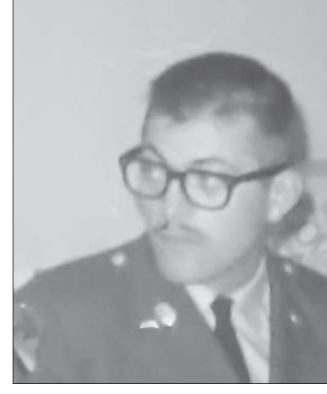
GUNNER KESLER
U.S. Navy • LCDR
30 Years



PHILLIP G. KOCH
U.S. Air Force
6 Years 6 Months



STUART LANKFORD
U.S. Marine Corps • LtCol
1992-2017



JAMES LAST
U.S. Army • E5 Crewchief/
Gunner
1967-1970



DESTIN LACEY
Army National Guard
3 Years



DERWIN ROYCE LANCASTER
U.S. Army
1954-1956, Korea



RON LENNING
U.S. Navy • Mail Clerk 2nd
Class, USS Epping Forest
1967-1972



DOUG LETZ
US Army Texas
National Guard
22 Years



JOE LIEB
U.S. Air Force • Strategic Air
Command
1957-1962



ZACHARY DEAN LUND
Army Reserves
2014-2020, 2014 Springtown
Graduate



WILLIAM LYKINS
U.S. Navy
1966-1968



BO MAINES
U.S. Air Force • E4
1995-1999



WELDON B. MCDANIEL
459th BG • 15th Army Air
Force • WWII



EDDIE MCCRORY
U.S. Air Force
1952 - 1956



JEREMY MCCOLLUM
U.S. Marine Corps
2002-2008 • 6 Years



RONNIE MCDOYLE
U.S. Army
2008-2013



JERRY MCNUTT
U.S. Marine Corps
2001-2005



JOHN MARTIN
U.S. Army
1974-1996



RYAN P. MARTIN
U.S. Navy
2001-2011, Springtown
Graduate



JASON MALEWISKI
U.S. Navy • 1995-2002
U.S. Air Force • 2002-2015



ADAM MASON
U.S. Army
6 Years, 2001 Azle Graduate



DAVID MCCLURE
U.S. Navy
1970-1978



JESSICA MCVEAN
U.S. Air Force • Medic E4
4.5 Years • Active Duty, 2008
Azle Graduate

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Attorneys: Rector and Eargle, PC



NICHOLE MERRITT
U.S. Army
2001-2009



JONATHON E. MEDERIOS
U.S. Army National Guard
2008-2016



VERONICA K. MEDERIOS
U.S. Air Force
2012-Present



DENNIS W. MEREDITH
U.S. Army • Major
1967-1993



MATTHEW MISHIO
U.S. Army
8 Years



JIM MITCHELL
U.S. Army
Airborne Sgt 1st Class
1966-1982



BOBBIE MOORE
U.S. Air Force
1995-2016



DONALD MOORE
U.S. Air Force
1992-2012



ALFREDO MORALES
U.S. Army
Specialist 4th Class
1965-1967



SAM MORELOCK
U.S. Army • Pvt. 1st Class
1969-1971, 1970-1971 Vietnam



STEPHEN MORRIS
U.S. Navy • FMF Corpsman
2016 Azle Graduate



BILLY J. MYERS
U.S. Air Force
1950-1970 • 20 Years



KRISTIN MYERS
U.S. Army
2005-2012



JEREMY MOORE
U.S. Army
1999-2007 • 7 Years



MONTE W. MOORE
U.S. Army
2 Years



BARRY NEFF
U.S. Air Force
Sr. Master Sergeant
1979-1999



CLYDE NOAKES
Air Force Reserves
1967-1973



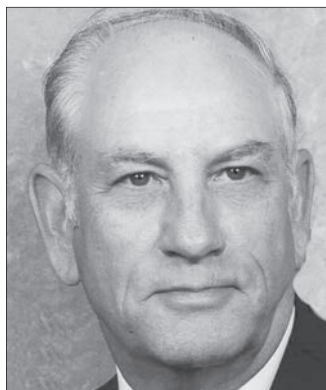
ROGER OWENS
U.S. Army
1967-1968, Vietnam



TOBY PALITTI
U.S. Navy
1970-1981



HAROLD PANKEY
U.S. Air Force • Lt Colonel
1948-1974



A.J. "TONY" PAPPAS
U.S. Air Force
Master Sergeant
25 Years, Retired



CARL E. PAPPAS
U.S. Marine Corps
1977-1981



TODD PARKER
U.S. Navy
2005-2009



ERIC PARRISH
U.S. Air Force 2010-2016
Air Force Reserves
2016-Present



PHILLIP COLE PAYNE
U.S. Air Force • Staff Sgt.
1999-2006



CYNTHIA PAYNE
U.S. Army
1991-2002, Gulf War



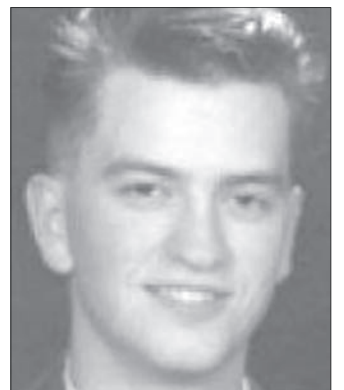
JUAN PEDROZA
U.S. Air Force
4 Years



JOHN PECK
U.S. Army • Corporal



JEROME PILGRIM
U.S. Navy
1954-1984



AARON PINKSTON
U.S. Army • 4 Years
U.S. Army Reserves • 4 Years
1988 Azle Graduate

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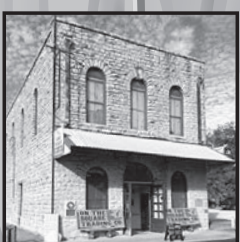
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Rebecca Bare

From country girl to top secret military typist

JOLEE SKINNER
jolee@tricountyreporter.com

LAKE WORTH — Rebecca Bare was a little farm girl in Bair, Pennsylvania. Her mother gave birth to her not at a hospital, but at home. Bare said back in the day, rural women didn't really go to the hospital to give birth. Born Jan. 4, 1936, Bare lived in the countryside her whole childhood and then joined the Air Force in 1957. Bare laughed as she told the story of how she and her friend joined the military. "A girl three years younger than me, she was 18 and she had a boyfriend she wanted to get away from," Bare said. "She told me, 'I hear you wanted to join the Air Force?'"

and I said, 'Yes.'" Bare enlisted and flew to Lakeland Air Force Base in San Antonio for basic training. After completing basic training, Bare transferred to Carswell Air Force Base, now known as Naval Air Station Joint Reserve Base Fort Worth. "When I came to Fort Worth, it was the biggest thrill for me," Bare said. "I came on that train and here was this big building in downtown Fort Worth that had a clock on top. The minute I saw that building, I thought, 'I'm in the big city.'" Bare became a clerk typist at the base. She shared that to get the job, she had to have a top secret clearance. "My boss was the comptroller," Bare said. "I had to get a



COURTESY PHOTO

Rebecca Bare basic training photo in the York Dispatch newspaper.

top secret clearance because I handled secret documents. My boss reported straight to the base commander. And what we reported to the base commander was the status of the aircraft." Bare spoke about what she wrote on and what tools typists used back then. "I used to write on this white board, it was like a blackboard but

white, with what was called a grease pen," Bare said. "But it was a long pencil that was wrapped in black in the middle, wrapped with paper and peeled off." Bare said she had the lowest rank and job on the base, but clerk typists were very important in the day-to-day operations on the base. Women often filled these positions to free more men to fight on the frontlines, especially during war times. Bare was in the Air Force for only two years, marking her exit in 1959. She said the Air Force taught the little, shy country girl in her how to put yourself out there and make new friends. Bare went on to marry her husband, J.W. Stevens. They have three children, two granddaughters and three great-grandchildren. Bare retired 22 years ago at the age of 66 from being an administrative assistant in the biomedical engineering department at the University of North Texas.

JOLEE SKINNER | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER
Rebecca Bare, 88, reflects on her time in the Air Force.



TONY PORTER
U.S. Marine Corps • Corporal
1976-1981



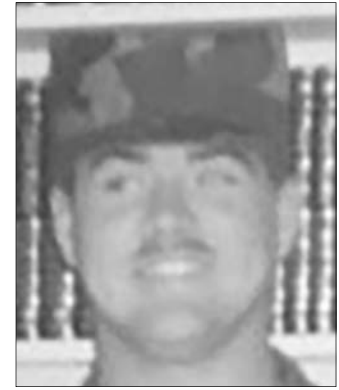
ALEJANDRO RAMIREZ
U.S. Marine Corps • Corporal
2017-2023



AUBREY RAMOS
U.S. Air Force
16 Years



KATHLEEN RAMSEY
U.S. Army • Staff Sergeant



DEREK RAY
U.S. Army
10 Years, 1988 Azle Graduate



CHARLES REED
U.S. Army • SP4
1961-1966



EUGENE L. REIMER
U.S. Air Force
Master Sergeant
1962-1985



BILL ROESICKE
U.S. Army
1971-1974, Vietnam



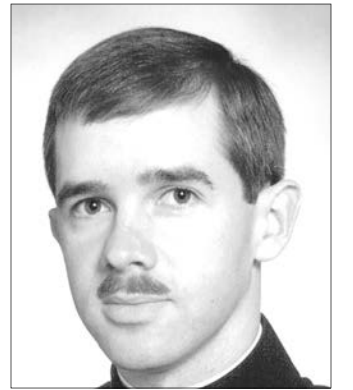
OTTO ROESICKE
U.S. Army Air Corp
WWII



JOSEPH ROGERS
U.S. Air Force • Captain 4
Years



FRANKLIN ROUP
U.S. Army • Corporal



DENNIS W. RILEY
U.S. Marine Corps
1974-1978



DONALD E. ROSE JR.
U.S. Navy
1970-1976



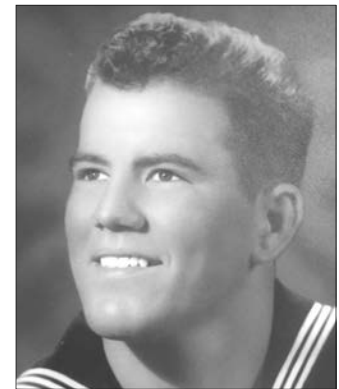
JOSHUA RENO
U.S. Army
2003-2006, 3 Years 6 Months



PENNY ROBINSON RILEY
U.S. Navy
1978-1984



JOANIE ORLOWSKI ROPER
U.S. Navy, 4 years
U.S. Army, 10 years



ROUEL F. ROTHENBERGER, JR.
U.S. Navy • Medic HM2
1959-1963 • USS Yorktown



DONALD SAWYER
U.S. Air Force
Master Sergeant
1972-1992

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U.S. Navy • E4
1997-2001



RICHARD SHALTON
U.S. Navy
21 years



GUY SHEPPARD
U.S. Army
1944-1946 • WWII



GERALD SHUTTER
U.S. Marine Corps, U.S. Army
1954-1975



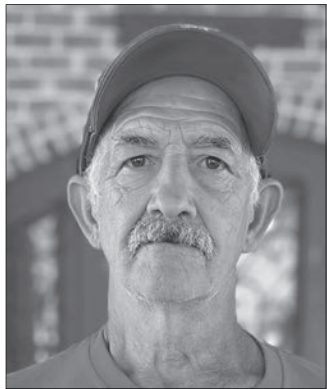
BILL SELLMAN
U.S. Navy
WWII



JEREMY T. SHERIFF
U.S. Army • Paratrooper
4 Years



DENNIS SHERRILL
U.S. Navy
1965-1969



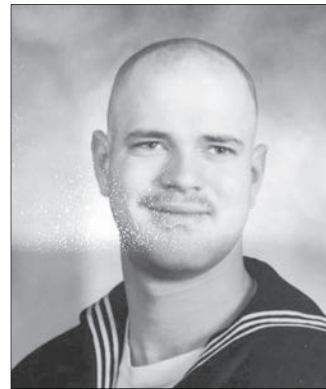
MARK SHRUM
U.S. Air Force • E3



JULIE SHRAKE
U.S. Air Force • SRA
1995-1999



DWAYNE D. SIMON
U.S. Army
Cpl. Band 179th & 5th
1952-1954



MATTHEW SINDLINGER
U.S. Navy
4 years



GARY S. SMITH
U.S. Marine Corps • 1st Sgt.
1981-2001



RICHARD SMILEY
U.S. Navy • E5



DAVID SMITH
US Air Force • Colonel
28 Years, Vietnam, Silver
Cross



JACKIE SMITH
U.S. Air Force • Staff
Sergeant



BRYAN SPHARLER
U.S. Navy
2011-201, Azle Graduate



JACK STEVENS
U.S. Air Force • Sergeant
1963-1967 • 4 Years



DAVID SNEED
U.S. Navy
1967



DAVID WAYNE SNEED
U.S. Air Force
1990-1994



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Captain
4 Years, 1960 Azle Graduate



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U.S. Army
1964-1966



ROCKY STEPHENSON JR.
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4 years



STONEY STONEBRAKER
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Lake Worth city manager reflects on time in Air Force

JOLEE SKINNER

jolee@tricityreporter.com

LAKE WORTH — Lake Worth City Manager Stacey Almond reflects on her service in the United States Air Force as Veteran's Day approaches.

Almond served in the Air Force from 1997 to 2006. She grew up in a military town, as Sky Air Force Base was about 15 minutes from St. Louis, Missouri, where she was raised. Almond shared that she was adopted when she was a baby. She believes her birth mother was associated with the Catholic church as she was adopted through Catholic charities.

Almond enlisted in the military at 19 years old. She says she'd never really considered college, which was ironic since both her parents are educators.

"I didn't really know what I wanted to do, hence the reason for going into the military," Almond said. "I just kind of wandered, unfortunately, aimlessly."

Almond said her parents were supportive of her decision to enter the military as they were aware of her struggles.

"I think they understood that I was struggling a little bit to figure out my place in the world," Almond said.

Almond didn't have any immediate family who had served in the military before. Almond's great-grandfather was a World War II veteran. Her father just missed the Vietnam draft since he was enrolled at the University of Illinois, as was her mother.

Almond left for basic training in San Antonio in July 1997. She admits she had never ridden an airplane before, let alone been in the state of Texas before. She didn't really know what was coming.

"I really didn't know what to expect," Almond said. "I mean, in the mid-'90s, the internet wasn't super popular. So, it's not like I could have Googled, you know, 'show me a boot camp video.' It was completely unexpected."

Almond felt proud of herself after training and tech school was done. She described the process her flight went through.

"I felt a sense of pride," Almond said. "The military is really good about taking the entire group of you and breaking you all down to the lowest level then building you back up kind of as a team and having a lot of camaraderie."

Almond stayed in San Antonio following boot camp as a security specialist. Later, she was stationed at Falcon Air Force Base, which is now Schriever Air Force Base. It's a small base outside of Colorado Springs, Colorado.

Almond was assigned to protect the space assets. Then she was stationed at F.E. Warren Air Force base near Cheyenne Mountain. Almond recounts what she was doing when 9/11 happened.

"I was working in the weapons storage area," Almond said. "And then the attack on the Pentagon took place and then I don't think I left after that point (the base). We were a part of a quick reaction task force."

Almond went overseas to Saudia Arabia, Kuwait and United Arab Emirates. She was just 21 years old when she traveled for the Air Force. She mentioned she spent her 21st birthday in Saudia Arabia.

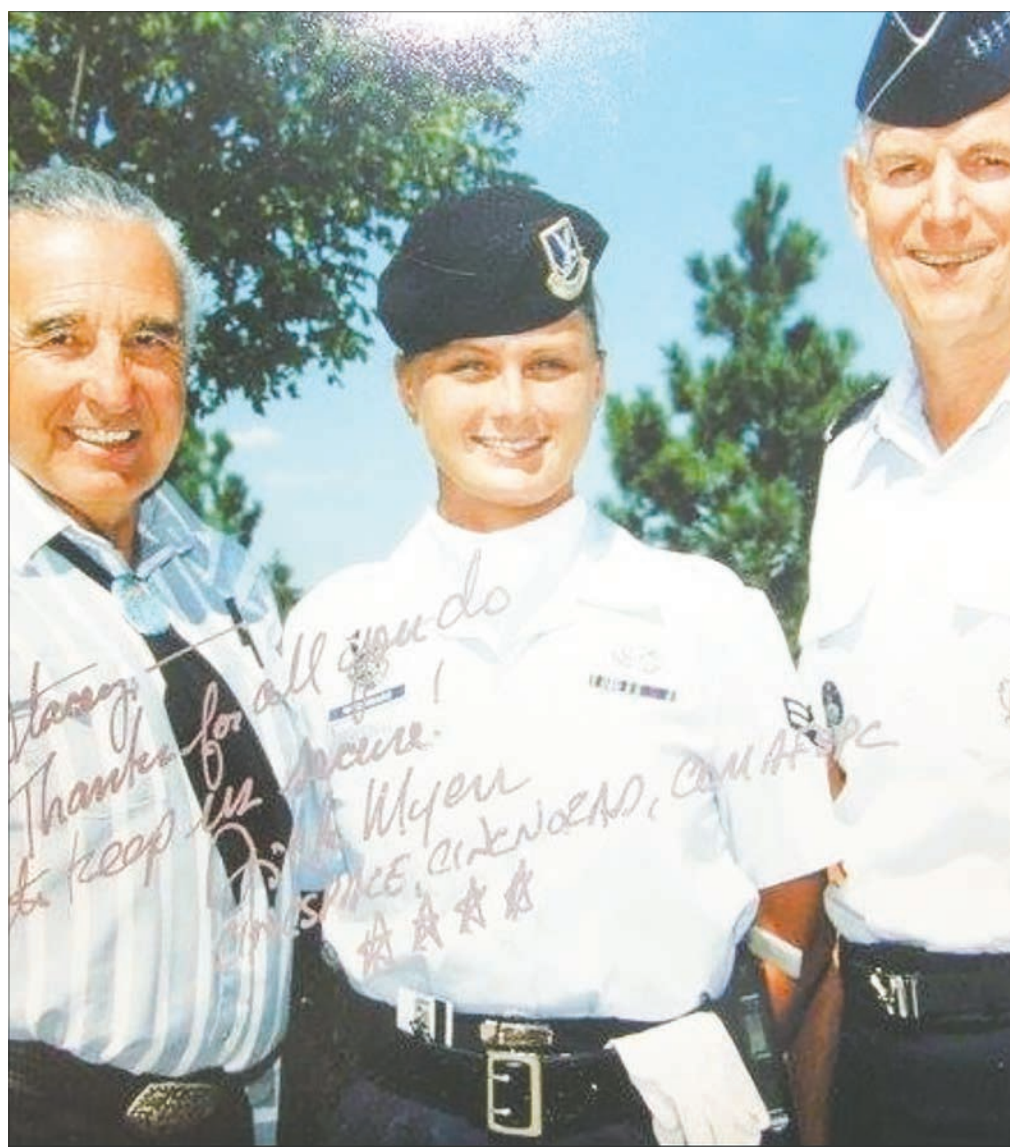
"It wasn't safe to leave. So, we flew a military airplane from Delaware to England to Germany to Saudi Arabia and then we stayed on the installation until it was our time to go home," Almond said.

Almond said her biggest learning experience being overseas was realizing how spoiled we are to live in America. She recalls a funny story when she traveled to Dubai.

"Because we had transitioned from Kuwait, we flew into the Navy base in Bahrain and they weren't expecting us," Almond said. "So, all of the military housing was filled up, so we had to go to the off-base hotel. Yeah. And I was like, 'Oh my gosh. This is amazing.' The nicest hotel I've ever stayed in was in Bahrain. Oh, wow. It was amazing. And the government paid for it. I was shocked."

Almond then went on to marry her husband who was also a security specialist in the Air Force. They met while she was in Colorado Springs. They were supposed to get married Oct. 20, 2001, but because 9/11 happened, they had to get permission from their unit commanders. Almond went on to serve in the Air Force for eight years and afterward went to college using her G.I. bill.

Almond describes her ex-



JOLEE SKINNER | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Lake Worth City Manager Stacey Almond, in the center, serving in the U.S. Air Force.

perience being in the military in one word: grateful.

"I'm just grateful that, you know, the military is open to everybody," Almond said.

Almond tied back to the

military helping her find her way into the world and finding her identity.

"It's like so many things wrapped into one," Almond said. "It was like self-confi-

dence. Motivation, like, just down to the littlest things. Being able to commit to finish something and see something through to the end."

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— Claudia Pemberton



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Combat Engineer
1966-1969



JOHN SUTTON
U.S. Navy
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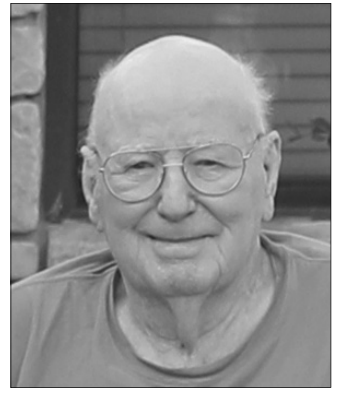
STEVEN STUTSMAN
U.S. Air Force • Master
Sergeant 1976-1991
U.S. Navy Reserve • Petty
Officer 1996-2004



WILLIAM WESLEY SHORES
U.S. Army
1942-1945 • WWII



JAMES SWAN
Army



FRANKLIN TAYLOR
U.S. Navy • Sergeant



HOUSTON M. TAYLOR
U.S. Army SFC
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Province, Afghanistan



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U.S. Army
1968 - 1971



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U.S. Air Force
Airman 1st Class
2019-Present



GABRIEL TORRES
U.S. Marine Corps • E4
2008-2012



JAMES TIDWELL
U.S. Marine Corps
1961-1967



CLIFFORD W. TEAGUE
U.S. Army
1956-1958



RICH TERRETT
U.S. Navy LCDR
1990-2014



ARTHUR SCOTT TURNER
U.S. Air Force • Lt. Colonel
1945-1978



TERRY R. THORPE
U.S. Air Force
1962-1982, Vietnam
Bronze Star



DAVID UTTER
U.S. Air Force • Sgt



VISTINE, TIM
US AIR FORCE Sgt E4
1979-1983



SHAUN WAITS
U.S. Marine Corp
1988-1992



JERRY WALDEN
U.S. Air Force
1965-1969, Vietnam



JERRY E. WALSTON
U.S. Marine Corps
Lance Corporal
1960-1966



ROBERT WARREN
U.S. Navy • E5
1996-2001



DON WEBB
U.S. Army
Specialist E4



JACK WELCH
U.S. Army



JOHN WHITTAKER
U.S. Navy
1961-1966

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Marine mom serves Springtown ISD

ZACH FREEMAN

azlereporter@tricountyreporter.com

SPRINGTOWN —From serving her country to serving her students, Shirley Cole has traveled the world to get where she is today.

Cole grew up in Houston and joined the United States Marine Corps right out of high school in 1986. She said she didn't feel she was ready for college yet, but a phone call and challenge from a military recruiter shaped the rest of her life.

"He told me, 'I've never had a woman Marine graduate from boot camp. You'll be my first one,'" Cole recalled.

With the challenge issued, Cole said she jumped into it without looking back, excited for the new experience ahead of her. Despite her recruiter even urging her to watch some videos and do research before attending boot camp, she was determined to do it her way and come into service with her fresh perspective. While the yelling from drill instructors was initially a shock, she said she adjusted fine after realizing they couldn't touch her.

The most difficult part of the experience was undergoing simulated gas attacks using 2-chlorobenzylidene malononitrile, a type of tear gas, and trying not to flinch with Parris Island sand fleas in her ears.

"It was a good place to start learning more discipline," Cole said of her South Carolina boot camp experience.

Cole attended boot camp with four other girls from her high school. After completing training, they all hoped to be sent overseas together.



COURTESY PHOTO

A photo of Shirley Cole during her service in the U.S. Marine Corps.

Ultimately, Cole was sent to Oahu, Hawaii for her first duty station while the other girls were sent to Japan. At the time she was disappointed but, by chance, the rest of her life was again shaped by the assignment.

Cole met her husband, who served as a small arms repair specialist, while on active duty in Hawaii. She went on to have two children while on active duty, later serving at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina and re-enlisting to serve in Quantico, Virginia as well. Cole advanced to the rank of sergeant and filled a leadership role training others entering the service.

Eventually, with the growing responsibilities of being a mom, Cole decided to conclude her service in 1993 after seven years.

"I loved it," Cole said. "I really enjoyed being around. I was very proud to wear the uniform, and I enjoyed it. It's just that I think my kids became my priority ... For

my children, it hasn't been as easy for them because they haven't been around family. I think that's the biggest, probably, I guess, disadvantage of the military is, you know, you have to leave family, and you don't see family as much. So for them, they have the sense of, hey, we never really grew up around our grandparents or our uncles and aunts."

Cole's favorite memories from her service include the sense of teamwork she felt in uniform.

"Everybody's important, everybody's job is important. You're counting on one another. We needed good morale, everybody just staying motivated and things like that ... There's a bond there. I have to go somewhere in a war with this person. I've got to be able to trust this person."

Her husband stayed on active duty, so the pair continued to travel, finally going to Japan. Cole discovered a love of education when volunteering at her children's school and earned a bachelor's degree online from the University of Maryland. Cole said she always had a heart for literacy and became a para-educator for several years. When she found out her youngest son was dyslexic, she set off on yet another path.

"I'd been wanting to learn more about it ever since he was diagnosed," Cole said. "I just was to the point that I wanted to specialize in reading. I want to teach students how to read and help them to be successful readers, because without that, they're not going to be successful in life."

Meanwhile, her husband eventually retired from the



ZACH FREEMAN | TRI-COUNTY REPORTER

Shirley Cole

military and the two began looking for somewhere quiet to settle down, outside of the city. After moving around North Texas, the Coles ended up in Springtown, where they continue to live to this day.

Cole continues her dream of being an advocate for kids like her son as a dyslexia interventionist for Springtown Independent School District.

While she is very happy with how her life has turned

out, Cole said she does miss traveling for the military and looks back fondly on her service. She is thankful for Veterans Day and grateful any time someone thanks her for her service.

"I'm honored by their gratitude — that shows me that they appreciate the sacrifices — because it really is a sacrifice, and then the service for the country. So that means a lot to me, for them to take the

moment to acknowledge that. It actually has been an honor. It's just been a fun time for us to both serve as veterans. We are very both proud to have served our country and be veterans. I just hope that the military always remembers our veterans. I hope that both our veterans, and men and women that are active duty, know that we are always praying and thinking of them, because they're special."



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U.S. Navy
4 Years



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U.S. Air Force
1959-1963



DAVID WHITE
U.S. Marine Corps
1962-1966



RICK WHITE
U.S. Air Force
1988-1992



CHARLES WHITLOCK
U.S. Navy • 4 Years
U.S. Marine Corps • 4 Years



RUSTY WHITT
U.S. Army • Special Forces
2003-2009



JIMMY C. WILEY
U.S. Air Force
1951-1971, 20 Years



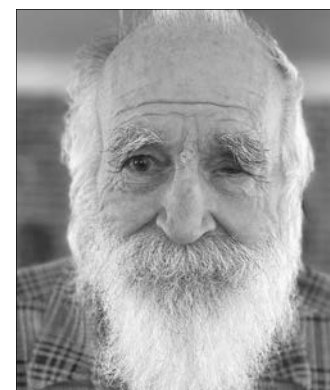
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U.S. Navy
1955-1957



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Civic-minded serviceman speaks about three decades as Marine

ZACH FREEMAN

azlereporter@tricityreporter.com

AZLE — Whether it's inside or outside the military, Stuart Lankford has dedicated his life to serving his country and community.

Lankford grew up in Dallas, but now calls Azle home. As a child, Lankford's maternal grandfather was an early Navy pilot who eventually became a captain in World War II. Lankford and his brothers were always enraptured by his grandfather's war tales.

"When we were kids growing up, every time that we visited Grandpa, he had the most amazing stories, and we all wanted to fly airplanes in the Navy," Lankford said.

Combined with the influence of "Top Gun," Lankford developed deep-seated dreams of being an ace pilot, though as he grew older, Lankford eventually found himself drawn more to the Marine Corps. Ultimately, his oldest brother became a Navy pilot like his grandfather. Another brother joined the

Army, and he joined the U.S. Marine Corps.

"Service to the country and patriotism was just a thing in our family," Lankford said. "(The Marines) were smaller than everybody else, but they were tougher than everybody else. It was just this aura, you know, around the Marines, the Iwo Jima Memorial, and just in the valor in history and all of those things."

In college, Lankford started talking to recruiters and between his freshman and sophomore years, he went to an officer candidate school where he said he found his life's purpose. At Baylor University he was referred to as "the Marine" because he always wore camouflage, combat boots and his officer candidate school shirt. "I was on a mission," Lankford said. "It just became like a calling, I guess, and just it was a very clear goal for me to pursue."

He completed his senior session at the officer candidate school where he did very well and graduated with

honors. After six months of basic training he joined the infantry. Lankford was very happy for his assignment, calling it the heart and soul of the Marine Corps. His first deployment as an officer sent him to a dry, craterous desert more than a thousand miles from his home: Palm Springs, California.

"It's a great place to cut your teeth, because you can go anywhere and you can fire any weapons system and one of our challenges is not can you employ a weapons system, but how do you integrate all of them in a combined and synergistic approach? So that's where I really learned my craft and weapons was my forte."

Early in his career as a young lieutenant, Lankford said he was shaped by spectacular leaders including General James N. Mattis. He went on to have a fruitful military career, serving 24 years and eventually reaching the rank of lieutenant colonel.

Lankford was deployed to the Pacific after Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein threatened to invade Kuwait again in 1994. He was eventually deployed to the Kuwaiti border as part of a "show of force" unit. Lankford later joined an anti-terrorism unit and was on deployment in Hawaii during 9/11. After the tragedy, Lankford spent the next four years reinforcing other bases in India, Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Korea and Japan because of concerns that more attacks could be coming. He was then promoted to major and came back to the United States to go to school. From there he deployed to Afghanistan where he and 16 other combat advisors helped train local soldiers to fight the Taliban.

"That was definitely a shaping experience for me, because you see combat operations from a very different perspective," Lankford said, "When you roll in as the Marine Corps, you have

lots of expensive equipment, and you have lots of highly trained individuals, and you have access to lots of really cool gadgets across all the services. When you're embedded with some Afghan commandos, you're eating goat, if you can find a farmer that's going to sell you goats, and then the soldiers cook up the goats. If not, you're foraging. It was a very different experience, but it allowed me to kind of look at the might of America from the other lens. It gives you perspective when you're in somebody else's backyard. When you walk around like you're the biggest thing since sliced bread, it's no wonder people don't like you, and so it was also a very humbling experience."

After Afghanistan, Lankford spent two years at the Pentagon, advising officers on operations, tactics and response options. He said one interesting experience from that time was getting to advise the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, who was getting ready to go brief the president.

Lankford went back to Afghanistan in 2011 for a year, performing a myriad of different duties, then returned to the United States after being assigned to train new combat advisors. By this point he was a lieutenant colonel and served the last two years of his service as executive officer for The School of Infantry — East.

Even retirement didn't stop Lankford from serving. After 24 years of active duty, he continued to teach doctrine, tactics, problem solving and leadership to young officers at the Marine Corps University in North Carolina for another six years.

Lankford said the time has flown by since his retirement ceremony Sept. 30 eight years ago. Wanting to stay out of the big cities, Lankford chose Azle in July 2022 to give his children a more grounded, humble upbringing. In the



COURTESY PHOTO

Wife, Kymm Lankford with Lt. Col. Stuart Lankford, in full regalia.

short time he's lived here, Lankford has been heavily involved in the Azle Optimist Club, 4H, Scouts and other local endeavors, even being named Optimist of the Year in October. Lankford said the military has instilled a heart for service in him which he has carried into his civilian life and his occupation at New York Life Insurance Company.

"I'm too old and broken to serve my country anymore, but that doesn't mean you can't serve your community," Lankford said. "You still can scratch that itch and serve. The cool thing is you get to see the impact. When you go to a foreign country and you try to help them or empower their capabilities, or whatever the case is, you don't necessarily know what the true impact is. In your local community, you get to see the change. You get to see the difference, whether that's with a family or a small business. So, it's still very rewarding and it's still something that you can get excited about."

One vital skill Lankford said he has gained from his service is learning to work toward a common goal with

others, regardless of any differences they may have.

"You have brothers of all nationalities and creeds and races and those types of things," Lankford said. "You're able to develop this trust, and this rapport, and this respect, because they are willing to put down their personal desires and their selfish wants in order to do something for the common good."

One of the adjustments Lankford said he has learned to make in his civilian life is learning to ask questions, adapt to life outside a strict regiment and hear other people's side of the story. Lankford would like to see more opportunities in Azle for veterans to meet, gather and make connections. He said his feelings for his time in the armed forces are still very deep and meaningful, and he genuinely appreciates being thanked for his service.

"I think that it's wonderful that there is a federal holiday to recognize veterans of all shapes and size, whether their sacrifice was four years or whether it was 40 years, you made a choice to be unselfish," Lankford said.



COURTESY STAFF SGT. MARK MORROW

Lt. Col. Stuart Lankford marches with the color guard at the School of Infantry — East in 2015.

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