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James Farmer

STORIES OF HONOR



with his family from West Virginia to Abingdon in the 1950s, was always good with repairing cars and other mechanics as a teen. Following in his father's footsteps who had served in the Army Air Force years before, Farmer began his own Air Force experience in 1966.

At the age of 18, he was sent to San Antonio Air Force Base for basic train-

ing, later receiving educational programs at Sheppard Air Force Base in Wichita Falls, Texas, before arriving in Germany.

During his four-year stay in the Air Force, the soldier appropriately was assigned to work as an aircraft mechanic on planes that arrived on base from different countries.

Farmer didn't see aircraft that had flown in combat. Most of that aircraft departed from California heading to Vietnam, away from where Farmer was stationed. But, he did occasionally work on aircraft that was armed and set up for combat.

He primarily did repairs on aircraft that was stationed at Ramstein, but also worked on planes from other bases throughout Europe that arrived at Ramstein on NATO business.

"They were F-4 Phantom jets including the F-102, G-91 and F-86. "Now, FR-4E had the Gatling guns," he said, explaining the Gatling gun is a rapid-firing multiple-barrel firearm.

"I figure I worked on about 69 different kinds of aircraft that came into our base. Some were old World War II aircraft and others were more modern," said Farmer.

"It was interesting to see the different planes---biwings, helicopters, and Navy planes."

Farmer was responsible for refueling, replacing and checking parachutes before take-off, and other inspections and repairs.

On one occasion, Farmer and other mechanics received notification ahead of time about an aircraft that was in need of repairs.

"One panel of the F-4 had 144 screws that needed to be removed. And, that was just one panel."

Farmer did repair work inside a 3x25-foot hangar on the Air Force base, but sometimes he worked on site. "I changed landing gear on a F-4 out in the bamboo docks in the middle of the night," he said.

Air Force duty was similar to working a regular job, he said. After his work day from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., he left the base to go eat at a military club or watch a movie. "We hung out just like the kids do now."

An important ritual was reading the love letters sent from his girlfriend, Delores Morrison, who is now his wife, Delores Farmer.

The couple married before Farmer left the service and his wife moved with him to Travis Air Force Base in Solano County, California during his last year of service.

Although he never went into combat, some of his friends did. His parents wrote their son a letter to let him know when one of his best friends had been killed.

"He was a really good friend. I still miss him," he said.

When his parents and his wife's parents needed help at home, Farmer decided it was time to leave the Air Force. He and his wife headed home in 1970. "If it hadn't been for that, I may have made the Air Force a career. There are times I wished I had stayed in. I really enjoyed my work."

He got to see several countries while in Germany. On one occasion, he flew to Oslo, Norway to change an engine on an aircraft. As a passenger, he left in the evening and flew back the next day in a helicopter.

The veteran, who has shared his service stories with his family, doesn't talk about it as much anymore. "I'd still like to return to Germany to see where I worked. I know it looks different now," Farmer said.

"But, every chance I get, I encourage young people to join the service."

Story by Carolyn R. Wilson

ABINGDON, Va. ---As an aircraft mechanic, U.S. Air Force veteran James Farmer never served on the frontline during the Vietnam War, but he was responsible for helping to preserve some of the most impressive aircraft flown during that time.

Farmer was stationed at Ramstein U.S. military base in Rhineland-Palatinate, a state in southwestern Germany. It serves as headquarters for the United States Air Forces in Europe - Air Forces Africa and also for NATO Allied Air Command.

The veteran, 73, who moved

Leon Brimm



Leon served 10 years in the Military, between the US Army and the Tennessee National Guard (278th ACR Troop F Bristol, TN) Upon completion of Boot Camp in 1998 to become a 19D (Cavalry Scout) he was assigned to Troop F 2/278th ACR based in Bristol, TN. The whole 278th was deployed in 2004 in support of Iraqi Freedom III. Upon arrive to Iraq, Leon worked in Baghdad Iraq and was based in the fortified “Green Zone”. His duties included Patrolling, Security, Reconnaissance and operations center management. On September 5, 2005 SGT Brimm and his convey was hit by a car bomb leaving his vehicle destroyed and everyone on the vehicle wounded in one way or another. SGT Brimm was awarded the Purple Heart and the Army Accommodation Medal with a “V” device for Valor for his actions that day. SGT Brimm is now retired and volunteers his time at the VFW Post 6975 in Bristol VA as the SR. Vice Commander.

Charlie Henderson



Charlie Henderson wouldn't trade his experiences serving in the Army, which he says helped him succeed in business and motor-sports. Yellowing newspaper front pages proclaiming U.S. military victories share the wood-paneled walls of Henderson's Abingdon office with photos of family members, cars, race cars he's owned and celebri-ties. The founder of Food Country USA wears a red racing jacket emblazoned with the company's logo — which includes an American flag. A Korea veteran cap holds down one corner of his desk. “When things got tough and things knock you down, you get back up. That's what the Army taught me, and it's the same with business. It's tough, but if you keep going, most times you'll win. The Army taught you how to get back up and try again,” said the 81-year-old. “Racing can be pretty tough, too. It's tough to win.”

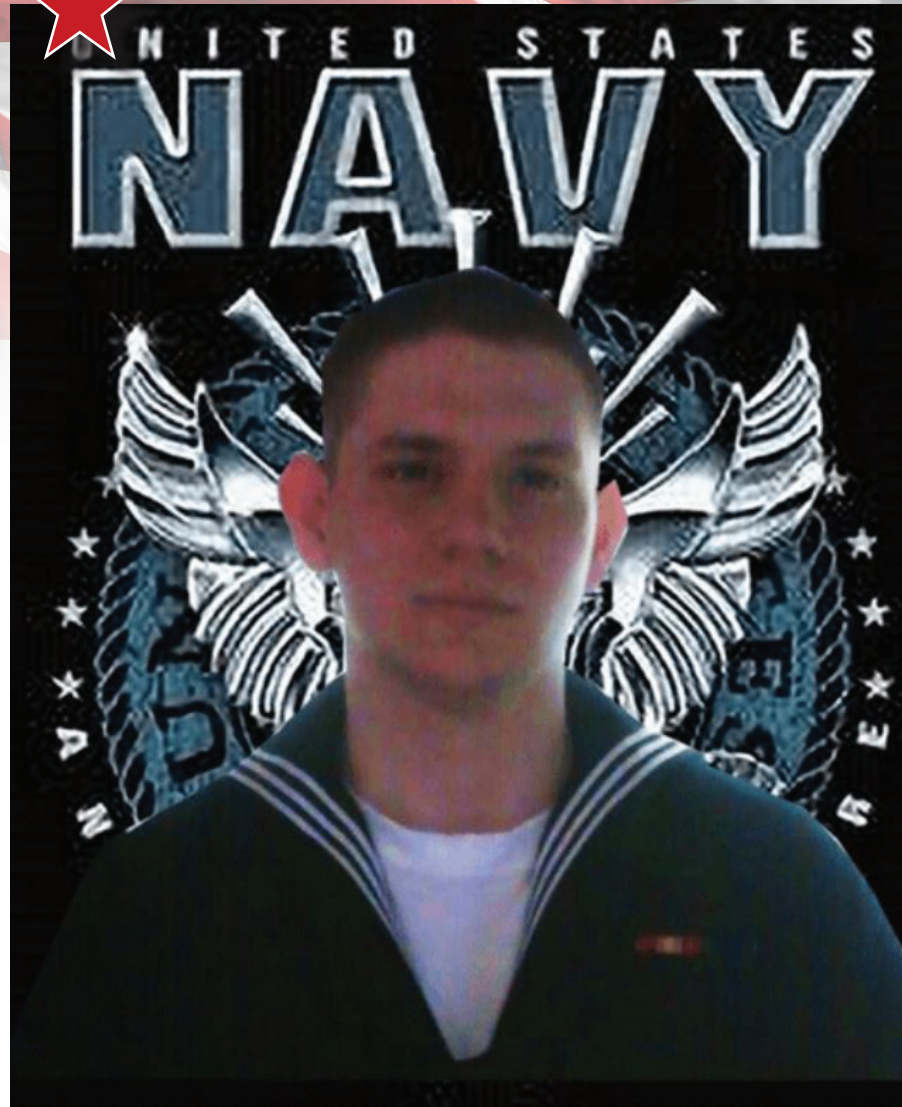
He was discharged in 1961 and returned home to open a grocery store in Abingdon. A couple of years later, he was called up for reserve duty and sent to Ft. Knox, Kentucky. He had to dig out his old fatigues, which remained in his duffel bag in the base-ment of his parent's home. The Vietnam War was heating up, but Henderson wanted no part of that. After two weeks, he returned home to run his business, which has grown over the years.

Daniel Jordan Sewell



Daniel Jordan Sewell from Bristol, Va Enlisted in United States Airforce March 2018. He is currently an E-4 Senior Airman (SrA) in which he is a Security Forces Patrolman (Military Police) at Moody Airforce base in Valdosta Georgia where he protects \$8.7 billion worth of assets a day. He has received countless 'Airman of the quarter awards' ... He has also been coined for display of heroism and professionalism by the Wing Command Chief, he is up for a promotion staff Sergeant where he recently tested. He will be enlisting in the National Guard at the end of summer where he will continue to serve and protect our county. He does all of this while being a single parent to his 3yr old son Theodore.

Aaron Isaac Arnold

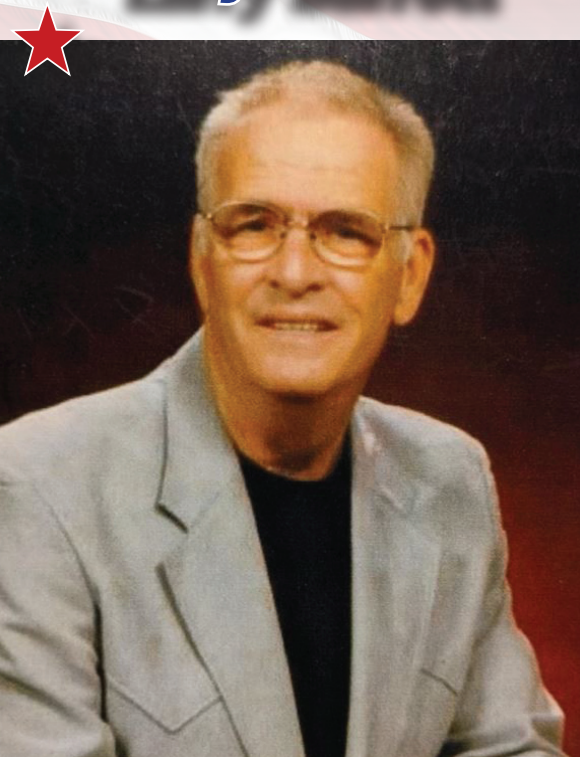


Isaac joined the Navy to help create opportunities for himself and his family. He was overseas much of his tour and, like many soldiers, saw things that he would have rather not seen. But he survived and excelled. He married a few months within joining the Navy and was stationed in northern Virginia for a few years. He loves and supports his country and is proud of his accomplishments in helping to protect America. Before the end of his tour, Isaac and his wife, Ashley, had a daughter. He was able to be in the United States for her birth but had to go back overseas almost immediately; thus, he missed most of his daughter's firsts in life. They also have a son.

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Three Generations of Service

Larry Barrett



U.S. Air Force Airmen
1964 - 1967

Larry Barrett II



U.S. Army National
Guard Specialist
Served in Operation
Desert Storm
1989 - 1993

William A Barrett



Virginia Army National
Guard Specialist
1992 - 1996

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AND ALL VETERANS WHO SERVED OUR COUNTRY
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