Veterans Downtown Banner Project

Brought to you by Emporia Main Street and The Freedom Fest Committee.

Celebrating the home of Veterans Day.

Updated Fall of 2016

Kenneth L Ace: Drafted into the US Army in August 1943, four months after his son was born. His basic training was in Fort Knox, Kentucky. He became a member of the 1st Calvary Division, which was a tank division. They spent their tour of duty in the Philippine Islands and New Guinea. While enlisted he achieved the rank of Staff Sergeant. He left the Pacific area on November 11,1945 and was reunited with his wife and his son on Christmas eve 1945. He said often that he owed his life to President Truman for ordering the bombs to be dropped on Japan. Banner sponsored by Dr. Gary Ace.

Zoe B Albers: Zoe B. Albers joined the United States Navy like his father before him. He was attending - what was then the Kansas State Teachers College - here in Emporia when the Vietnam War became a reality for him as it did for many young people. He reported to boot camp in December of 1972 and by July 1973 he was aboard the USS Sterrett in the Gulf of Tonkin, Vietnam. He was a Gunners Mate; servicing all the 3"50, 5”54 gun mounts and small arm maintenance. He cleaned them, assisted with them and fired them when needed. At night he could see the firing happening on the mainland and when all was quiet he could find his thoughts drifting to thoughts of home; to what his everyday life use to be. Fear might try to take hold in the midst of these thoughts but "you couldn't think about that...that could grip a person. You had to look at it as a job." After the air strikes were called off over Cambodia, the Sterrett sailed back to its home port in San Diego and eventually to a long yard period in Long Beach. Zoe was honorably discharged in April 1975 receiving an early out to enroll in summer school at what was then EKSC. He picked up where he left off in Emporia; majoring in biology. While at college in Emporia, Zoe met the girl who would become his wife. Leisa was also a biology major and they would both end up finishing their college careers at K-State. Zoe and Leisa then had 2 children; Sarah and 3 years later, Keith. Zoe went on to use his biology degree as a zookeeper at Sunset Zoo in Manhattan, KS. Then life led him to be a farmer in Western Kansas - raising cattle and farming wheat. In 2005 he and Leisa retired to Eastern Kansas and he now enjoys playing his guitar, jewelry making, playing with his grand kids and kayaking in his spare time. Life has taken Zoe many places, taught him many things. When asked about his service in the US Navy he said that it made him grow up. Before the Navy, he was a hippie trying to figure it all out; and while he might still have miles to go he knows this much - he loves his family, his God, and his country. "It was an honor to serve." Banner sponsored by Leisa Albers.

Cynthia Agler: Army, Sergeant Major, 31 Years of Service

Clark Allemang: Clark signed up for the Marines in 1964 and was sent to boot camp in San Diego, CA. Clark did well in boot camp earning his first promotion to PFC and was named "series honor man" (1st out of 230 other boots). Clark was sent to Vietnam in June 1965 and came back as a Corporal in July 1966. Assigned to Headquarters Company as NCOIC of the "classified material" section. Through his office came most of the top secret data sent west of the west cost. Clark was discharged in August 1967 to again attend KSTC. Banner sponsored by the Allemang Family.

Thomas Vance Baldwin: Tommy served during the Vietnam war, 1956 - 1976. He served in many countries around the world. Always as a security officer. He guarded various missile sites, transported missiles, trained security officers and also guarded President Johnson's plane while he was stationed in Puerto Rico. He retired from the Air Force after 20 years of service. After retirement he was employed as a security officer in banks, etc. He also developed the security program and trained officers at the Wolf Creek Nuclear Plant. He currently resides in The Armed Forces Retirement Home in Gulfport, Mississippi. Banner sponsored by Patty Mayes and Family.

Donald Bare: Navy, Quartermaster S 2nd Class 1944-1952 Donald E. Bare was born Nov. 1st 1926 to James and Amy Bare. Donald started his military career at the young age of 17. He enlisted in the Navy in Topeka, KS and served 4 yrs. of active duty during World War II and continued as a Navy reserve for 4 more years. Upon his arrival home he met his wife Wilma Easter. It was love at first sight. They wed June 8th, 1952 and were blessed with 3 children. Donald and Wilma raised their family in Topeka, KS where they owned Capital Marble and Tile Company. Donald devoted his life to serving others; he built homes for Habitat for Humanity, was an Arab Shriner for many years, loved his local YMCA, and was a big supporter in the local Optimist. Donald was a good man, a hard working man that served his country proud. On November 17th, 1996 Donald lost his battle with Alzheimer's. Banner sponsored by Jacque Wellnitz.

C. Gene Barrett: Marine, Sergeant, 1975-1979

Terry Basler: In 1979, at the age of 19, Terry joined the Kansas Army National Guard A Co 35th Infantry Division in Arkansas City, Kansas where he served until 1985. He reenlisted with the Kansas National Guard A Co 35th Infantry Division in Winfield, Kansas from 1987-1992. After 9-11, in 2003 Terry reenlisted with the Kansas Army National Guard 778th Transportation Unit in Emporia, Kansas. In August 2004 his unit was called to report to Ft. Riley to train for deployment to Iraq. They were stationed in Kuwait. On May 31st, 2005 while on a mission in Baghdad, Iraq, Terry was wounded in a rocket attack and received a purple heart for his injury to his right leg. After a year and a half recovery at BAMC in San Antonio, Texas he was honorably discharged from his military service after having served 17 years. Banner sponsored by Vicki Jones.

Brian Raymond Bender: Brian signed up for the Navy in January 1976 during his senior year at Emporia High School. Shortly after graduation and a few days before he turned 18 years old, he was off to Boot Camp in Orlando, Florida. 22 years late in 1998 he retired as Chief Petty Officer Aviation Machinist. He was stationed at several bases throughout the United States including Orlando and Jacksonville in Florida; New Orleans, Louisiana; Millington, Tennessee; Point Magu, California; and Grand Prairie, Texas. Brian and his wife, Georgie , live near Terrell, Texas and he is employed by the United States government in Dallas. Banner sponsored by Georgie Bender

Donald Berrie: A life long resident of Lyon County, Don attended Boston school until closing and then attended Emporia Middle and High School. In 1965, he enlisted in the US Army Reserves in the Emporia unit of the 1011th Service and Supply Company. His unit was called up and they were in Vietnam on Camp Bearcat in 1968 and 1969. His Reserve unit was the only unit ever called up in the entirety and sent overseas. Upon returning, he resumed his job with the Santa Fe Railroad and began farming on the family farm. He and his wife, raised two daughters on the farm where he still resides. Banner sponsored by Ann Berrie and Family.

Chester Beyer: Army, WWII European Theater 3 years of service

Dan Bitler: Daniel V. Bitler attended boot camp in Idaho. His first paycheck was distributed in all silver dollars. Unfortunately, the uniforms had only a small watch pocket thus he had to carry all his dollars to get a money order to send money home. At Camp Pendleton, he received medical corpsman training. Dan shipped out of Seattle for several more additional weeks of training on Maui, and this, for a man who loathed pineapple! He sent a coded letter to his sister, Abbie, who then figured out where he was. Together, with the 4th Division Marines in Hawaii, he shipped out to Iwo Jima. He was on the third wave sent onto the island around dusk the first evening of invasion. By this time the beach was already littered with bodies. A 4th Marine Division hospital was to be set up at Motoyama #2 airfield. Dan saw the American flag raised on Mount Suribachi and said the island erupted in cheers when this event happened.

The wounded were taken back down to the beach then back onto ships. When transferring the wounded to transports to return to the ships, souvenirs from the island were often traded for food. The food he took back to share with the doctors and other corpsman at the Marine Division hospital. Dan also traded haircuts for food on the ships. Most men did not like the service haircuts. They began to ask for him by name, which wasn't surprising since he was a barber back home in Kansas. Dan worked with another medic on Iwo Jima who went on to KU school of Pharmacy after the war. Clarence "Pappy" Galbraith eventually bought the "drugstore" in Madison after seeing Dan's barber shop across the street.

An instance of booby-trapping by the Japanese was a leather briefcase on the floor next to a dead Japanese soldier in a concrete bunker. His gut told him not to touch it and to call it in as suspicious. A truck trailer/ bulldozer was backed up to the bunker. The dozer and bunker were destroyed and Dan was safe. At one point, while working at the division hospital, Army intelligence brought a wounded "Jap" to the hospital. They asked Dan to get his medical equipment and help the prisoner. He returned with his M1 Carbine rifle inquiring where they wanted him to "doctor" the prisoner. The Army intelligence left with the man. He was technically not allowed to have the rifle, but was given the rifle by an artillery sgt. on Maui. Dan later told his family that he had seen too many corpsmen killed due to a lack of weapons. This rifle was sold to a physician who lived in Pennsylvania and wanted the rifle to use for hunting.

When leaving Iwo Jima, Dan visited the 4th Marine Division cemetery. He next went by the Japanese prison camp; he was not surprised to find very few prisoners. Dan arrived home via San Francisco. Before the ship came into the port jeeps, medical supplies, and tires were thrown off the ships. Dan felt this was wrong as these items could have been used by the American people. The reason for "dumping" the supplies was to not allow the American people to see the supplies the military had while the people at home had to ration.
Daniel V. Bitler's service to his country instilled a strong sense of patriotism and American pride in his family. Family members to follow in his footsteps include his son, Daniel L. Bitler, 101st Airborne, United States Army who fought and served in Vietnam. His son, Fred Bitler, was in the United States Marine Corps. His grandson, David Hamman, USMC officer, is currently serving in Afghanistan. Banner sponsored by Kathy Hamman.

Howard Blender: Lt. Howard E. Blender grew up on the family ranch north of Saffordville, KS. Howard was born December 21, 1921 at Keokuk, IA to Philip Sr. and Flora Blender. The family arrived in Chase County in 1924 after purchasing a ranch adjacent to other family members who had established cattle operations in the Flint Hills. Howard attended Toledo Township High School where he was active in athletics playing both football and basketball.

Howard spent his early years working on the ranch with his parents and older brother, Philip Blender Jr. Young Howard and Phil enjoyed a wonderful childhood in the Flint Hills filled with cattle, crops backbreaking work, and family. The two brothers still found enough time to enjoy a little fun as well. Stories of Howard and Phil making milk runs to Saffordville in record time from the Blender Ranch in a Plymouth hotrod coupe are the thing of family legend! We can still imagine them barreling down the winding dirt road along Buckeye Creek terrorizing whatever may lay in their path and leaving a thick cloud of dust and laughter behind them! The two brothers shared a close bond and planned on entering the ranching business together someday.

The entrance of the United States into World War II changed Howard's life course. Upon graduation from high school, he begged his parents to let him join the Army Air Corp. so that he could pursue his dream of becoming a fighter pilot. His mother Flora thought it would be much better and far safer if Howard built planes instead of flew them. Eventually a compromise was reached that allowed Howard to move to Burbank, California where he lived with extended family and worked in the Lockheed Vega Aircraft Plant building B-17 Flying Fortress bombers. Not surprisingly, exposure to the shiny aluminum, powerful engines and massive propellers that surrounded him at the Vega plant only fueled Howard's ambition to climb into the cockpit himself.

In October of 1942 Howard enlisted in the Army Air Corps, and after finishing ground school in Midland, TX, he entered primary flight training at Goodfellow Field near San Angelo flying the AT-6 "Texan" trainer aircraft. In February 1944, while stationed at Moore Field in Mission, TX he received his silver wings and was commissioned as a 2nd Lt. in of one of the largest classes of fighter and bomber pilots in the history of the Central Flying Command.

After a 10 day furlough at the family ranch near Saffordville in the early spring of 1944, Howard returned back to Moore Field for further training in Air Combat Maneuvering and Aerial Gunnery. At this time, he also began to receive more advanced training in the P-40 "Warhawk" fighter that he was assigned to fly during his deployment. Early in July of 1944, Lt. Blender was assigned to the 11th Fighter Squadron in Anchorage, Alaska and took further instruction in instrument flying. From this assignment, he was then transferred to active duty on the Aleutian Island Chain. Stationed First on Adak Island and then on Amchitka Island as part of a forward defensive task force who's mission was to protect the American mainland from a potential Japanese invasion. The handful of letters sent back to Saffordville during Howard's time in the Aleutians spoke of cold, overcast conditions which made flying treacherous.

Thoughts of his family, the ranch and the Flint Hills were always in his heart. Many of his letters home requested updates on his Dad's corn crop, wondering if his brother had rounded up any custom cutting work for the wheat harvest and requests for cookies from his mother.

Near the end of October, 1944 a telegram was carried up the winding road north of Saffordville over the bridge on Buckeye Creek, and finally to the ranch headquarters where members of the Blender family still live today. One sentence changed the family's lives forever. "The Secretary of War regrets to inform you that your son, 2nd Lt. Howard E. Blender was killed in action October 21st, 1944 on Amchitka Island, Alaska." Details of the incident that took young Howard's life are difficult to come by. Many of the casualties and aircraft incidents in the Aleutian campaign were attributed to the incredibly difficult and dangerous weather-related flying conditions of the area. He was just 22 years old.

Howard was laid to rest in the Memorial Lawn Cemetery in Emporia, Kansas. His headstone bears the image of the P-40 he was so very proud to fly as a tribute to his service and courage. Pieces from the wreckage of his P-40N aircraft, serial number 42-105270 were recovered and used in conjunction with components of other aircraft to complete a replica P-40N that is on display at the Hill Air Force Base Museum near Ogden, Utah.

Modern day immediate family members include his nephew Howard (Trudie); niece, Sharon (George) Gardner. Great nieces and nephews Corinne (Tom) Patterson; Callie (Jeremy)Thomsen; Shannon (James) Blocker; Krista (Eliott) Linsenmeyer; Ray (Stephanie) Gardner; Philip (Stacy) Gardner & Emily Gardner as well as numerous great-grand nieces and nephews.

Banner sponsored by Tom, Corinne & Clara Patterson

Sidney Breckenridge: Navy, Coreman HM3, 1951– 1954

Donald P. Bright: E5 1952-1956

Caleb A. Bright: Caleb joined the Marines in February, 2002 after graduating from Emporia High School. After boot camp at MCRD in San Diego, CA he was sent to Camp Foster in Okinawa from 2002-2005 where he worked in the Motor Transportation Department. While stationed in Okinawa Caleb was sent to South Korea, Iwo Jima where he had the honor of accompanying WWII Veterans for the 60th Anniversary of the historic battle on the island, and assisted in a humanitarian mission in Thailand. Caleb was deployed to Iraq as a part of Operation Iraqi Freedom in 2005. He completed his 4 years of active duty in February, 2006; however, he was recalled to active duty in 2007 and served a second tour of duty in Al Asad, Al Anbar Province, Iraq from February, 2008 to October 2008. Caleb attained the rank of Sergeant while serving in the Marines. In March, 2010 Caleb joined the US Army Active Reserves and is currently a Recruiter, Sergeant First Class. Banner sponsored by Jeff and Mickie Bright.

Matthew J. Bright: Matt joined the Marines two weeks after graduating from high school in May, 2004. After completing boot camp at MCRD in San Diego, CA and School of Infantry at Camp Pendleton, where he qualified as a Designated Marksman, Matt was assigned to 3rd FAST from 2004 to 2006 . After completing training at the Northwest Annex Training Grounds in Chesapeake, VA and at Quantico, VA, Matt was stationed in Cuba and then to Bahrain. While stationed in Bahrain Matt participated in the evacuation of American citizens and nationals from the American embassy in Beruit, Lebanon in 2006 during the Lebanon-Israeli War. Upon returning to the United States, Matt was assigned to the 3/2, 3rd platoon stationed in Camp LeJeune, NC and was 1st squad leader and 1st fire team leader. Matt was deployed to Al Qa'im, Al Anbar Province, Iraq as a part of Operation Iraqi Freedom in October, 2007 and returned to the United States in May, 2008. After discharge Matt received his Bachelors in Education degree from Emporia State University. Banner sponsored by Jeff and Mickie Bright.

Ronald D. Brockelman: Ron started his military career at the age of 17 with the Kansas National Guard, but soon enlisted in the regular Army. After a tour in Germany, he tried out for and was accepted for Special Forces (Green Beret) training. He served with Special Forces for over 20 years, and retired as Sergeant Maor, with a total of 27 years service, from 1955 to 1982. He served in numerous countries around the world, including 24 months (2 tours) in Vietnam. He earned the Combat infantry Badge, Master Parachute Badge, SCUBA Divers Badge, Military Freefall Badge, Ranger Tab, Airborne Tab, Special Forces Tab, Greek and Vietnam Parachute Badge, and the Jungle Expert Patch, His decorations include the Bronze Star, Army Commendation, Air Medal, 2 Purple Hearts, Humanity Service Ribbon, Meritorious Service Ribbon, VN Cross of Gallantry, and many others. Banner sponsored by Jean Brockelman.

Orville Brooks: Orville Brooks was born April 26, 1924, and raised in Ft. Scott, Kansas. He turned 19 in April 1943 and was drafted in May. After induction at Ft. Leavenworth he was sent to Santa Anita, CA, for basic training. After basic, he was assigned to Cook and Baker's School and became a company cook, the position he held for the next 22 months. In January 1944 his company traveled by troop train to Camp Kilmer, NJ, and sailed for Liverpool, UK. The next 5 months were spent training for the invasion of France. His company landed on Utah beach June 18, 1944. Unfortunately they were put ashore at the wrong location and it was two days before their Battalion found them. For two days they had no food or supplies, so they found discarded parachutes to use as covering at night and "mooched" food and necessities from other units. They finally located their Battalion which became part of the Third Army's advance. The Ordinance Evacuation Company was responsible for retrieving damaged tanks and other rolling equipment and sending them back for repairs. As such the company was always behind the front lines, and moving whenever the combat companies moved. The company cooks were responsible for keeping 180 men fed, often while they were on the move. Their "kitchen" consisted of trucks outfitted with water tanks, stoves, and work areas. There was no refrigeration and the cooks regularly had to go to the nearest Quartermaster unit to be issued supplies. They also scrounged the countryside for whatever fresh vegetables or meat they could find, although this was frowned upon by the Army. Orville's unit followed the advance of the US Army into and through Germany, and were in Czechoslovakia when the war ended. He remained in Europe until December 1945, when he was sent home to Camp Chaffee, AR. He was mustered out in time to go home for Christmas dinner with his mother in Ft. Scott. He was paid $600 back pay and was eligible for unemployment after arriving home. It was six months before he was able to find a job, sweeping floors in a drug store. Eventually, Orville and his family settled in Emporia where he worked at Montgomery Ward department store for 30 years. He worked in the original Ward store in the 700 block of Commercial St. and at the Flint Hills Mall store. He was working at the mall when it was hit by the tornado. Orville turned 90 years old in April, 2014, and could still tell stories about the war in vivid detail. He passed away September 4, 2015 at the age of 91. Banner sponsored by Judy Dodson.

Vernon H. Buck: Vernon was born August 2, 1921 in Emporia, Kansas to William Mays and Minnie Hammond Buck, He attended Union Elementary School, Lowther Junior High School and Emporia High School, and enlisted in Company B, 137th Infantry of the Kansas National Guard in Emporia. He was called to active duty in 1940, and departed with Company B in January, 1941 for extended training at Camp Robinson, Arkansas. After the attack on Pear Harbor, he underwent further training in California and was assigned to what later became known as the American Division. He served in the Pacific Theaer from 1942 to 1945, during which time he participated in five major campaigns against the Japenese, including Guadalcanal, Bougainville and the liberation of the Philippines. Vernon Buck served in infantry and anti-tank units, attained the rank of Sergeant before his honorable discharge on August 28, 1945 and was awarded the Bronze Star. He later served as Administrative Service Technician for Company B, retiring in 1978. He then worked for the Lyon County Road and Bridge Departmenet before retiring in 1991. Vernon Howard Buck dies on August 26, 2012 at the age of 91. Banner sponsored by Chad Buck, Rick Buck and Family.

Marvin D Buckridge: Army, 1st Emporia soldier to die in Vietnam 1967. Banner sponsored by Marsha Aeschluman.

Aaron Bura: Army Air Corps, Technical Sergeant, Bomb Squadron, 1942-1945, WWII
My Last Mission: It was December 31, 1944 and we were sent on a mission; one plane to Balikpapan, Borneo to bomb and destroy small boats carrying out oil from the harbor to load onto ships. We were flying at treetop level in a B24 Bomber and did damage to these boats which were very well armed. On the way home we were met by four Japanese fighter planes. They attacked us and hit the number 2 engine and me on the first run. I was in the tail section firing a 50 caliber machine gun when three of the planes came back and shot at us again. The damage was already done to our plane. They made three more passes at us again. We could not transfer a tank of fuel so we had to salvo it (drop it). Along with being short on fuel we had various other problems, but made it back to base safely. They took me to surgery and the doctor said he could not remove the bullet. I was in the hospital tent when Washing Machine Charlie came over and bombed us because he thought we were drunk. He was partially right because it was New Year's Eve. This was the second attempt on my life that day. Because it was right after my surgery when the bombing happened, I was not able to go to the trench so they covered me with five mattresses to protect me. The next day my crew came and told me when we landed that we only had 15 minutes of flying fuel left. This was my 35th mission and I needed 42 to come home. They would not let me fly anymore so I was sent home, back to the States, in April. I still carry the bullet to this day. There were three more surgeries to remove the bullet but they were unable to without the possibility of being paralyzed for life. I guess it was not my time, the Lord was not finished with me yet. He still had things for me to complete on this Earth, for which I am truly thankful. Banner sponsored by Linda Sadowski, Rose Anne Bura, and Dennis Bura

Fred Burenheide: Army, Private 1st Class, Germany,1953-1955. Banner sponsored by Bruce Burenheide

Alfred "Shorty" Burnett: Army, 4th Infantry 1942-1945 Shorty enlisted April 14, 1942 at the age of 22 and proudly served until honorable discharge on November 25, 1945. He was a Private First Class Military Policeman and was stationed for 15 months in the Aleutian Islands, Alaska with the 4th Infantry. He earned the Rifle M1 Expert medal and the good conduct medal. He was shot in the chest (a hair away from his heart) by an Army buddy during a photo shoot and was found sitting in a chair drinking coffee when the medics arrived.
One of his favorite stories was a on train ride from Georgia at a scheduled station stop, several ladies entered the train and told the young soldiers if they would give them some money they would bring them back some beer for the rest of their trip. The excited young Soldiers started handing over their money with no questions asked , Shorty only gave them $5 while some his buddies handed over as much as $20. As luck would have it the ladies never returned with any beer !! Banner sponsored by Nancy Rumold.

Paul Burris: 1943-1945. Paul's 18th birthday was May 28th and by July he was inducted into the Air Force. After basic training in Amarillo, Texas, he was sent to Casper, Wyoming for crew training. He celebrated his 19th birthday in England with the 8th Air Force-448th Bomber group. Their crew was in the 2nd group over on D-Day. Paul was a tail gunner on a B-24. On the 10th mission they lost engine power and were interned in Sweden. A MIA telegram was received by his wife. The crew was flown back to England with no ammunition aboard and no escort. The next stop was California and back to Topeka, Kansas. The war in Japan had ended or Paul was going to be sent to the South Pacific as his next destination. Banner sponsored by Ilene Burris.

Dwight Bush: Dwight served with the mountain and cold weather training command in Leadville, Colorado before going to Germany. SP5 Sergeant, 3 Years of Service. Banner sponsored by Winky Bush.

Donald Capes: Boatswain's Mate 2nd Class 1943-1946. Donald Capes enlisted in the U.S. Naval Reserve on February 19th, 1943 while a student at Syracuse University and reported for active duty on February 26th. He served his entire tour on the U.S.S. SC-712, a submarine chaser, in the Pacific Theater. Don was honorably discharged from the Navy on January 16th, 1946. James Forrestal, Secretary of the Navy, in a letter sent to Donald, dated February 12, 1946 stated, "No other Navy at any time has done so much. For your part in these achievements you deserve to be proud as long as you live. The Nation which you served at a time of crisis will remember you with gratitude". Banner sponsored by Scott Capes.

Robert Caron: Robert "Bob" M. Caron was born in 1935 and raised in Dallas, Texas. After receiving a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Oklahoma in 1957 he was commissioned as an Ensign in the United States Navy. At this time he reported to flight school in Corpus Christi, Texas where he earned his wings and became a naval aviator. Bob spent most of his active duty career on the west coast of the United States where he flew Lockheed P2V Neptune Maritime Patrol and ASW aircraft searching the northern Pacific Ocean for soviet submarines. He stated that he served his country "by keeping the west coast safe from enemy submarines and pods of migrating whales" which were often reported by commercial airline pilots. Each sighting required a maritime patrol be dispatched to survey the area.

Bob's patrol squadron also spent time patrolling the Pacific Proving Grounds, site of US Nuclear testing prior to the signing of the Limited Test Ban Treaty in 1963. Bob was discharged from active duty and transferred to the US Navy Reserve in 1962 with the rank of Lt. Commander. His final active duty station was with Patrol Squadron Nine based at the USNAS in Alameda, California. Bob completed his reserve obligation at the Dallas NAS in Grand Prairie, Texas. Bob is a distant relative of George R. "Bob" Caron Technical Sergeant and tail gunner on the Enola Gay on August 6, 1945 and of Navy Corpsman and Medal of Honor recipient Wayne M. Caron for whom the USS Caron (DD-970) was named in honor of on October 1, 1977.

After leaving the US Navy, Bob began a career with IBM which took him all over the United States. After retiring from IBM in 1992, Bob and his wife Susan returned to Garnett, Kansas to be near Bob's mother, whose family has roots in Anderson County going back over a hundred years. They lived there until his death in 2008 at the age of 72. Bob was buried at Garnett, Kansas with full military honors. He is survived by his wife, Susan and their four children, Steven, Elizabeth, Douglas and Charles and seven grandchildren. Banner sponsored by Douglas Caron

John Choate: John Marion Choate, who was born on a farm in Lincoln County, KS, in 1896, left home when he was 14 because he did not want to be a farmer. His left his dad, mom, two sisters, and two brothers and started a new life. He started working for the Santa Fe Railway and was able to get a job with the Santa Fe as an engine wiper. That job is not easy because after the coal fired engine is cooled, one crawls inside the part of the steam engine that housed the area where the coal had been burning and then cleans the interior of the firebox. Next, he spent time shoveling cinders from the coal burning engines. He left the Santa Fe after that and then was re-employed as engine wiper and call boy. John moved to Emporia on Kansas Day, 1915. By then he was working as a fireman on a Santa Fe steam engine. He became a Middle Division fireman in September 1915.

He was drafted and entered the Army in May 28th, 1918. He received his full uniform and the next day was assigned to the 17th Co. 64 Depot Brigade, and started life as a soldier on July 25th. He was sent to Camp Dodge, IA on August 4, and was assigned to Co. B 338th Machine Gun Battalion AEF. He really didn't like the Iowa move because he had KP duties for 4 or 5 days. The battalion was soon sent to Jersey City, NJ, boarded a ship, the Kasmir. Once aboard ship, before becoming part of a convoy, and reaching Liverpool, England, they were on the water 12 days. He told me that he was so proud of himself because here he was, a Kansas guy who spent several days on a ship sailing on the Atlantic Ocean and didn't get seasick. The group of soldiers were taken to London to see the many beautiful and historical buildings, cathedrals, and castles. After crossing the English Channel on choppy waters, they arrived in France on September 4, 1918. Their sleeping quarters were in the attic of a French house, and the each had two bundles of straw to sleep on.

Dad told me about the time there were two guys were scheduled to crawl across No-Mans Land to take some papers with important information to another group of American soldiers a distance away. One fellow would be several yards ahead of the other. The first time John was assigned that job. The man ahead of him was killed. The second time he was assigned to crawl over No-Mans Land to take a message he was the first one and the second guy was killed. To explain a bit further, the fellows assigned had to climb out the trenches and crawl under a lot of barbed wire all the time listening to the guns being fired by the enemy. It must have been difficult to get the machine guns moved. The men did the pulling like mules would have. The machine guns were mounted on something like a small trailer with wooden wheels made with wooden spokes and the ground was often muddy. He would mention the French railway cars the soldiers called 40 and 8 cars. That meant the French rail cars could hold 40 men or 8 horses.

John was overseas for almost 2 years, coming back to Emporia, KS in July or August of 1919, which was more than 7 months after Armistice Day. His job was waiting for him. He worked in several divisions of the Santa Fe. He worked out of Slaton, TX, and short time, then to the Oklahoma Division, the New Mexico and Arizona Divisions, Middle and Eastern Divisions of Kansas. John was an engine fireman for many years and later became the engineer on the steam engine, them became the Road Foreman of Engines. He was sent to the Chicago area where he spent several weeks learning how the diesel engines worked. He was the engineer on the first diesel to come through Emporia and then on to Newton.

John M. Choate and Irene Fleming were married in June of 1923. Irene was the daughter of Thomas J. Fleming who had been the Marshall of Emporia. John's father, who was a Civil War veteran had grown up in Southern Illinois and served in the Co. A 56th Regiment of the Illinois Infantry. His army group was engaged in the terrible battle in order to win the Battle of Vicksburg.

Dr. Robert Clarke: My dad, Dr. Robert F. Clarke, was an Engineer on several ships with the Merchant Marines during World War II, during the years of 1943 - 1948. Many people don't know what the Merchant Marine unit did during the war or may have never heard of this unit, but they served and supported all of the troops fighting throughout the war. The Merchant Marines were the armed supply ships carrying various supplies, from tanks, armaments and munitions to food, fuel, clothing and all other necessities that the troops might need while fighting this important war. They were specifically targeted by the Japanese kamikaze planes and German submarines because these were the supply lines keeping our forces fed and fueled. My dad occasionally would recall one particular night of heavy attack when a kamikaze plane was shot down but continued to travel directly at my dad on the ship. It luckily hit the water just off of the side of the ship, but close enough that my dad could feel the heat from the fire. Many of the Merchant marine ships were sunk during the war, especially when they were in huge fleets traveling alone far from reinforcements.

World War II was filled with violence, hatred and pain, but also created many beautiful moments that lasted into the future; sometimes it is a love story. One evening, my dad, who was from Norfolk, Virginia, and his friend, Bob McNabb of Melvern, Kansas , were sitting on the deck of their ship talking about life, the war and family. Bob had just received a letter from his sister, Elaine, and decided to show my dad a picture of her, back home in Melvern. My dad loved the picture and asked if he could write to her. After some thought, (after all this guy was from the East and Bob wasn't very sure of his motives) Bob said that he could but watch what he said to her. Over the months, letters flew between the two and they became closer and closer. Bob and my dad were on leave together and my dad traveled to Melvern to visit Elaine for the first time, with her big brother chaperone. He brought a ring with him, which my mom, Elaine, was so excited to accept. The next time they met in person, a few months later, they were married and after the war ended, my dad and mom moved to Emporia, Kansas. I showed up a year later and my brother, John, now in Wichita, 3 years later. They were married 50 years before my mom passed away, and my dad a few years ago, still in love with her and with his southern accent. Banner sponsored by Dr. Linda Clarke and Dr. John Clarke.

Ernest Clerico: Ernest L. Clerico (Ernie) was drafted into the U.S. Army in August 1942 at the age of 43. He completed basic training at Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri and then was transferred to Ft. Smith, Arkansas where he married his wife, Mary Lou. Although he worked for the Santa Fe Railroad, the 759th Railway Operating Battalion was attached to the Missouri Pacific Railroad. They shipped out to Oran, Algeria in March 1943. Following service in Algeria, the battalion served in Italy, Germany and France. Following the surrender of Germany, Sgt. Clerico returned to Emporia in June of 1945 where he was reunited with his wife and met his daughter, then 18 months old, for the first time. Banner sponsored by Sally Clerico Conard.

Gerald Clock: Navy 2nd Class Gunner's Mate 1963-1967. Gerald Grant Clock was born October 7, 1941 in Aiken County, Minnesota. He graduated from Cedar Springs High School in Cedar Springs, Michigan in 1961. He enlisted in the US Navy where he served 4 years (1963-1967) as a gunner's mate 2nd Class on an aircraft carrier USS Valley Forge. Banner sponsored by Gerald Clock's Family.

Ray T Combes Jr: He joined the Army February 1943 and trained at a medical school in Little Rock, Arkansas for the remainder of 1943. He then volunteered for the Hospital Ship USHS Dogwood which crossed the Atlantic Ocean from New York City to Liverpool, England and returned patients back to Charleston, SC.

In 1945, USHS Dogwood navigated the Panama Canal to the Pacific Ocean to the Philippines, Australia following battles to return the wounded to Los Angeles, California. After the Peace Treaty was signed on the Battleship Missouri, the USHS Dogwood arrived in Los Angeles. Ray had enough points to get out of the Army. The points were calculated: one point for each month of service, one point for each month overseas, and each battle was five points. To be discharged, you needed eighty five points.

After Ray left the USHS Dogwood, the ship was destroyed in December 1945 by a Japanese kamikaze plane which hit the ship right where he had been stationed on the ship and killed fourteen of his Army buddies. Had he not had enough points, we (his children and grandchildren) would not be here to honor him. Banner sponsored by Bruce Burenheide

William Franklin Cook: William received his basic training at Camp Crowder, Missouri. He was transferred from there to receive further training in California. Upon completion of his training there, he was moved to Camp Shanks in New York. His unit was shipped out from Camp Shanks to serve in France. While there, they worked their way through France, Belgium, and across Germany until they arrived at Bremehaven. Being a Technician Fourth Grade (T/4), William was stationed at the 121st General Hospital as a Medical technician in Bremerhaven, Germany in 1946. Upon leaving Bremerhaven, Germany by ship; he was sent back to America by ship to Fort Dix in New Jersey where he was discharged. He boarded a train in New Jersey and traveled home to Emporia, KS. Banner sponsored by Bonnie Klump

Steven Corbin: Navy SK2 1972-1976. Banner sponsored by Linda Corbin

George Crocker: Navy Air Pacific Theatre Squadron VPB-106

Movie Shown near Iwo Jima Battle:March, 1945

Darkness came early on Iwo Jima this night, accompanied by a thin blanket of fog that covered the island. I stepped out of our four-man tent into the fog, when I observed two figures, partially visible, moving toward me. When closer, I realized, they were marines. Normally after dark, no one walked far from their tents. As they came closer, one marine, in a friendly manner, called out: "Hey, Airedale, Wanta see a movie?" He had noticed my fur-collared flight jacket. "Airedale", being a rather derogative name for navy airmen, often uttered by marines (when stateside), with a touch of sarcasm plus slight envy. The reason? Flight pay! No extra pay for serving one's country at ground level. "You kidding?", I asked. Nope, they weren't. "Get your buddies, and come along, we'll wait a minute for ya." I told the other "Airedales" of our good fortune to see a movie. At first, they didn't believe me. But soon we were following our two marines, when suddenly, a star shell exploded, lighting the night sky and penetrating the fog, then machine gun and rifle fire spoke with authority.

But this was insane! Showing a movie, when over the ridges to the North, marines are pinned down in bomb craters, while the enemy is heaving grenades their way. However; the movies made sense. It was a great way for marines, back from the fighting, to get their thoughts away from the bloody battle. We came over a knoll and in a hollow area, there it was--a bright movie screen, medium sized, a shaft of light from the projector cut through the fog, and there he was---Mr. Charles Boyer---that famous hollywood star. But was anyone watching his acting? No one was in sight. Then as I peered through the haze and shaft of light from the projector, I saw numerous, small humps, like rounded ant hills scattered about the ground in front of the screen. They were marine helmets, like the ones we were wearing. So we did what the marines had done. We made like we were at the beach and with feet and helmets dug a hollow in the volcanic ash. I swizzled my body around until I had made a comfortable contour with my arms and helmeted head above ground. The night was cool, yet being buried in the warm volcanic ash, I was very comfortable I never learned the title of the movies, even though, they made up a trilogy, each film starring the suave, Charles Boyer. Unfortunately, I don't recall the names of his leading ladies, made woozy by this suave Frenchman's romantic charms--in the early morning hours, we'll be airborne, a mission to the coastal waters of Kyushu, Japan--to attack enemy shipping--the moves will be only a memory....

Only Airstrip on Iwo Jima Opens to Emergency Traffic

A few days following the marines capture of the only Japanese built airstrip on Iwo Jima, or what was left of it, it looked like an airstrip in name only. The runway had been bombed for days, weeks, even months, by ship and air, prior to America's invasion of this volcanic island. But now, the near magic of reconstruction by our navy's "Seabee", working day and night, often taking rifle fire from the enemy beyond the runway. They soon had repaired this dirt and volcanic strip, now open to all American aircraft in an emergency. So numerous were planes requesting emergency landings, the control tower, a lone jeep, fitted with receiver and transmitter, plus, a mounted whip antenna, quickly became Iwo's air-control "overload".

A B-29 bomber, soon followed by others, returning from a night bombing raid over Tokyo, exhibited recent wounds of war, the fuselage revealing grotesque tattoos, a disfiguring compliment rendered by Zeke fighter pilot's machine guns. Larger wounds, gaping holes in the wings, inflicted by the enemies' accurate anti-aircraft batteries, half the tail blown away, landing gear missing, or malfunctioning, the plane's hydraulic system damages. If the scene wasn't so serious..a life or death matter, the scene unfolding, including the aircraft in the holding pattern circling the island, much like bees swarming a hive, had all the elements of a classic french comedy. This B-29 as it was landing, had two of it's

four engine's propellers "feathered" on the starboard wing. The pilot being forced to hold that powerless wing in a nearly vertical position (no small feat), then quickly dropping the wing level with the nearly horizontal port wing just before hitting the ground. The bomber, without landing gear, like many other damaged aircraft to follow, was soon lost in a cloud of volcanic ash and dust while skidding on it's belly half the length of the airstrip. When coming to rest, pilots and crew hardly had time to clamber from their aircraft before a bulldozer crawled from a side bulwark, clanking and puffing it's way across the runway and slammed into the side of the plane, straining to push the damaged craft from he runway into a deep ravine, called the "boneyard", or "aircraft graveyard" there to join the massive "scrap-heap" of tangled, torn and twisted metal, a multiple menagerie of so many Japanese and American airplanes, once beautiful soaring silver birds.

The dramatic action continues: Our PB4Y-2, privateer bomber had received permission to land, without an emergency, but for administrative reasons. Our skipper, Squadron Commander, William S. Sampson, a Navy Academy graduate, was in charge of all naval aircraft operations on Iwo. Rank and responsibility made for privilege. We entered the flight path, and needed the entire airstrip, applying the brakes as to not overrun the landing area that ended with a high embankment, and Japanese forces just beyond. At the end we made a 180 degree turn and started to taxi back from whence we came, for no side taxiways existed. Suddenly, the plane's throttles were shoved forward and the plane began to gain speed as if to be airborne. My initial thought was: the enemy had somehow regained a part of the airstrip, possibly behind us. For a better view, I climbed into the top turret and witnessed a frightful scene. A navy torpedo bomber, a TBF (First President Bush flew one), it was still airborne, having over flown nearly a fourth of the runway and was about to crash on top of our plane, the quick thinking by our pilots to gain speed hoping to avoid a crash had saved us. The bomber passed over our plane's high tail by only a few feet. That TBF pilot never did see us. He had entered the flight path, perhaps, without permission, some pilots in real trouble did land out of turn, adding more confusion to the already chaotic nightmare.

Following the near miss, the brakes were applied, nothing happened, the brakes had burned-out when landing. We cleared the runway as another battle scarred B-29 landed. We headed toward a cleared area beside the strip where a couple of dull green tents stood, plus the jeep, the base for air control operations. A few marines in front of the tents were seemingly taking a break. When quickly, marines in our privateer's path scattered, others fell flat to the ground to escape being hit, possibly killed by the plane's slowly whirling props. Abruptly, there was a crash and simultaneous halting of our thirty-five ton privateer's forward motion. To avoid chopping to bits the larger green tent directly in front of us, Commander Sampson, had chosen to plow this, our flying weapon, directly into the side of an unmanned forklift a few feet in front of the tent. The result, a smashed bow turret, horribly crushed. The 5- caliber machine gun barrels aiming skyward. Suddenly, pilots and others, perhaps twenty men, streamed out of the tent, much bewildered, having a pale appearance. "What happened?" someone asked. "That old forklift just saved your live," barked a marine.

IWO JIMA Invasion, February, 1945 Radio, Radar Operator and Top Turrett Gunner Crew, One Patrol and Bombing Squadron VBP-106 Pacific Theater:

February 19, 1945, before dawn we were airborne, having departed the island of Tinian from the Mariana's Islands, heading north to Iwo Jima. Our mission, to fly coverage for the US invasion of Iwo Jima. Our specific mission was to then fly northward toward Tokyo to intercept two squadrons of enemy bombers and Zeke fighters, flown by kamikaze pilots, believed by naval intelligence to be flying south to attack our invasion forces at Iwo.

The weather and sea conditions were relatively calm near Iwo Jima. But, this would change as we flew north ward. Soon we were flying through broken patches of ugly, wintry gray clouds. The pacific too changed. Now, the ocean appeared a slate-gray, it looked cold and confused, choppy waves, slanting, tossing whitecaps into the wind to become spume and spoon drift. Our four-engine, heavily-armed bomber, a navy PB4Y-2, called the Privateer, was soon fighting head-winds, the wings testing the designed max for flexibility, seemingly waving us a final farewell. This far north, we should have made radar contact with the enemy squadrons. We had flown to the navigational point of our return. That point, designated on our navigational chart as: Lots's Wife. It wasn't white nor made of salt, rather a black tone, vertical formation, rising a hundred or more feet above the ocean's waves, and being plummeted mercilessly by huge formidable breakers. We circled this strange stone pinnacle that appeared much like a massive whale standing on it's tail fending perpetual breakers.

We selected a new compass heading, a return course to Iwo Jima. In doing so, each one in our eleven man crew harbored mixed emotions, disappointed we hadn't fulfilled our mission, making visual or radar contact with the enemy, and having transmitted that intelligence back to Iwo Jima to the US Naval Command. And yet, we felt slightly relieved that we hadn't made that contact. The odds of our being "shot down" favored the kamikazes. A deep watery grave in that cold northern ocean, would likely have been our fate.

Days later, back at our home base on Tinian Island. We learned that unsuitable weather had prevented the

enemy from attacking our invasion that first day. They hit our forces two days later. In late afternoon, near sundown, fifty kamikaze pilots, flying Zeke fighters, and Betty bombers swept in low to attack our fleet Their flight had been spotted on radar much earlier; however, the planes were mistakenly thought to be US aircraft in that area A few carrier fighters were launched to investigate. The incoming aircraft were identified as "bogeys". Two were shot down. Other enemy fighters found their "honorable death." Most were sent flaming from the sky, but two found their target, killing hundreds of airmen and sailors. The carrier Saratoga was hit and put out of action for the rest of the war. Her casualties: 123 killed, 192 wounded. The carrier Bismarck was sunk--the number killed or wounded was 717. Total killed or wounded on both aircraft carriers was: 1032, airmen, sailors and marines.

With the passing of decades, I still ponder this question: Had their Kamikazes attack occurred on February 19, and we had located their position far from Iwo Jima, and transmitted the enemy's location back to our US Naval Command, would lives have been saved?

And what about our situation? With certainty, the enemy would have spotted our plane on their radar, and being out-numbered and out-gunned, what chance would a lone US Navy bomber have against fifty Zeke fighters? We can rightly assume --- we wouldn't have survived.
Banner sponsored by Harry Stephens

Indulis " Indy" Dambro: Chief Warrant Officer Four.

CW4 Indy Dambro retired from the Kansas Army National Guard on January 31, 2011 with over forty years of service. He enlisted in the Kansas Army National Guard on December 10, 1970 in Ottawa, Kansas. His first assignment was with Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 127th Field Artillery. After eleven years and reaching the rank of Specialist Sixth Class, he then transferred to the 169th Support Battalion, 69thInfantry Brigade in Topeka. There he began his career as a Legal Administrator with the Judge Advocate General's Corps. In 1984, after earning the rank of Warrant Officer One, he transferred to the JAG section, Headquarters, 35th Infantry Division, (Mechanized), at Ft. Leavenworth and remained there until 1991. He then returned to Topeka as the Legal Administrator with the JAG Section, Headquarters Company,State Area Command (STARC).

During his career, he deployed with the 35th Infantry Brigade (Mech) to Bosnia-Herzegovina in support of Operation Enduring Freedom. He also participated in Operation "Tiger Balm" in Ft. Leavenworth, Operation "Cobra Gold" in Thailand and Hurricane Gustav in Louisiana. Most notable was his eight month active duty tour as Legal Administrator for the Office of the Staff Judge Advocate, Fort Benning, Georgia. He was responsible for the operation of the Fort Benning legal office involving over seventy-five military and civilian personnel and a one million dollar budget.

CW4 Dambro earned his Bachelor's degree from Emporia State University, and has been employed by the university for over forty years as well. He was responsible for the presentation of the Employer Support for the Guard and Reserve's "Patriot" award to Emporia State University for their employer support of military personnel. Banner sponsored by Jo Ellen Dambro.

Robert L. Cunningham: WWII 1942-1945, 34 Tank Battalion TC 5 Gr. Excerpts from letters written by Robert to tell his story. May 1942, Camp Cooke, CA, "I'm in the Armored Force, in the Heavy Tanks Company." November 1942: "I'm in Fort Knox, KY, going to Armed Force Tank Mechanical School. There are boys here from all over North America. When we graduate we should be 1st Class Tank Mechanics, or we sure hope to be." January 1943: Part of a poem written by Robert, "In this Army brave, strong and true our one great aim is clear, to rid the world of torture and forever banish fear so that love will forever be here. We have the Axis on the run. Total defeat they will yield. And we will sink the Rising Sun with the tough boys the US makes." August 1944: Sent from France, "Well for a long time you have been wanting to know what I've been doing so at last I can tell you for my tank has been in missions and we have spent 5 days and nights up at the front lines and they say we are behind the front lines now but a lot of times I think different for the boys are trying out their big guns. My tank took part in one big battle for it was the third tank to enter a large city and this city was a quiet city until we entered it and started in shooting them all hell broke loose. I was main gunner in my tank and really I took great pleasure in shooting out all the windows and doors but you will never know how I felt or the thoughts I had as we entered town and I can honest say that I need never go to a western show anymore to see a town shot up and you will never see such shooting in a show as what we did in that city."

1944 sent from France:" I have not written any letters for a long time for we have been on the go too much. At night time whenever I sleep, outside of my tank with a gun under my head so really it's not any picnic over here but we are doing Ok. I am Ok. Love, Robert." August 21st, 1944 Robert received the Bronze Star. September 1944: a letter from John Steven, written to Robert while John was in the Army hospital. "First I want to thank you sincerely for the noble was you exposed yourself to enemy fire to administer first aide to me at the time of the accident.. There is never a day goes by that I am not thinking and praying for you." January 1945, a letter from Robert's cousin, Norval, to his Aunt and Uncle. Sent from Germany. "Well last night I was on guard and some tanks came by and I asked them about Robert Cunningham's outfit and they told me it was down the road so when I got off guard duty I found them down the road. He was speechless when I walked up to him. He and I hadn't seen each other since April 1940, nearly 5 years. We only talked few minutes and he had to move out." March 1945, a letter from Robert to his cousin JoAnne, sent from the Rhineland. "Well, in the last 2 weeks I have seen lots of girls and boys who were your age working as slaves and boy, what a life they live. So you should be happy that you don't live in Russia or Poland or some of these countries."

May 9, 1945, a letter to his parents from Northern Germany. "I am fine and dandy and the war is over with over here and that's the thing I have ben looking forward to for three long years. Some of it has been just a little rough. I hope that I don't have to go to the South Pacific." September 3, 1945, a letter sent to his sister from LeHavre, France., "Going HOME! We leave here September 6 and go straight to the boat. It takes 5-8 days to make the crossing, I am going home and you will not here from me anymore until I get to the States." October 10, 1945, Robert arrived home. He participated in 5 major campaigns: Normandy, Northern France, The Rhineland, The Ardennes Forest and in Central Europe. Robert Cunningham was a "Light Tank Gunner 1736" and a "Carbine Sharpshooter", July 1943. In 1945 Robert returned to his home south of Moline and began ranching. September 14,1947 Robert and Neva Lea Osborn were married at Elk Falls. Robert unexpectedly died at age 63 on December 2, 1978. My Dad, my Hero. Banner sponsored by Connie Hudson

Robert W. Cunningham: Known as "Bob" to all who knew and loved him, he was the only one in a group of 24 young men drafted from Allen County in 1952, who went into the Marine Corps. In as a Private and discharged in 1954 at the end of his service as a Sergeant, he was always a proud Marine. He took his basic training at San Diego and Pendleton, and then was assigned to an air wing at El Toro, where he served his entire active service. His squadron at one time was ordered to Korea, but flight plans were cancelled during the night and were never repeated; in a way it was always one of his regrets. Stories he shared of his experiences were usually funny– out on a ship in full battle ready gear with a 50 pound pack on his back he was told to jump into the ocean ("but I can't swim") and how quickly he discovered he could– asked why he ate his food so fast ("you do or you don't get any")- field training while under fire (can't possibly be real bullets") at Pendelton proved that the ("keep your head down") order was for real– and all Master Sergeants were to be obeyed at all times and without question. He made many good friends and maintained those friendships throughout his lifetime. They were good memories for him, and his deep respect for the Marine Corps was lifelong. Banner sponsored by Barry Cunningham and Family.

Alex "Pete" Darting: "Pete" entered the Army in December of 1941 right after the attack on Pearl Harbor. He trained in El Paso, Texas and was nicknamed "3 turn" for his skill on skis. He was a member of the 156th Infantry Regimant and the 2nd Infantry Division of the US Army. He was a member of the ranger, the skitroopers, and paratroopers. Pete was a member of the 15 man ranger force selected as bodyguards to General Dwight Eisenhower while in Versailles, France. He served four years during WWII and was honorably discharged on September 18,1945. While serving towards the end of his service, he was walking on a wall that was bombed out from underneath him and sent to a military hospital on August 18th, 1945. He was then sent home on September 21,1945 and spent several months in the Veteran's Hospital in Topeka, Kansas where he underwent reconstruction on his knees. Pete was awarded the American Campaign Medal, the European-African-Middle East Campaign Medal with 2 Bronze service stars, the WWII Victory Medal, the Combat Infantryman Badge, 1st Award, the Expert Badge and Bayonet Bar, the Sharpshooter's Badge and Rifle Bar, the Honorable Service lapel pin and was awarded a Bronze Star. Banner sponsored by Jan Darting and Family.

Bernard D Davis: Navy, F1C USS Perry. Banner sponsored by Roger Davis.

John D Davis: Navy, MOMM 3/C WWII

Jack James Davis was anxious to serve his country in WW II, as his father had served in WW I. He enlisted in the Marine Corps at 17, while still in high school at Florence, Kansas. After high school graduation the military sent him to college in various places, including Texas A & M, Monticello, Arkansas and Quantico, Virginia. When he was sent overseas, he was stationed in China as a member of the Military Police. This service provided many interesting stories and a Marine Corps emblem tattoo. Upon returning from his tour of duty, he was a member of the Marine Reserves and continued his education in Emporia, graduating from Kansas State Teacher's College (now ESU).

Married and with two small children, he was teaching in St. John, Kansas when he was called to serve in the Korean Conflict. After he had given up his job and a replacement had been found, the first orders were cancelled. He worked in the meat department of a grocery store until he was again ordered to report for duty. He was packed and ready to board the boat to go overseas when he was called out of line. He had been identified as a teacher, the base had decided to offer classes, he would stay state side as an instructor. His wife and two children (a 6 month old and two year old), went to Camp Pendelton, California. They lived in half of a Quonset hut and made curtains out of target cloth. In 1953 the family returned to Kansas where Jack continued his career in education until his death in 1977. Banner sponsored by Julia Giger

William Davy: Navy E2, 1972-1975. Banner sponsored by Joni Hensley

Jimmie D Dawes: Jimmie Dale Dawes was drafted into the Army in February of 1971. Jimmie & I were married & had an almost 2 year old son & I was pregnant with our daughter. Jimmie did his basic training at Ft. Leonardwood, MO. He was stationed at Ft Benjamin Harrison, in Indianapolis & came down with orders for Vietnam, so they put him in specialist training & remained stateside. Then, he came down with orders for Korea. As he was waiting to leave, a guy came up to him & ask Jimmie, if he had a family. Jimmie said, 'yes', so the guy told Jimmie to hurry & go to the office & switch their names. This guy had gotten orders to stay stateside & he wanted to go to Korea for combat pay. Jimmie didn't think, it could be done, but went anyway. The gal at the office did switch names & Jimmie stayed at Ft. Ben Harrison. God is good! Jimmie came down with orders again for Vietnam, but Colonel Barrett wrote across the orders, 'delete, cannot spare.' So Jimmie finished out his 2 years at the Finance Center in Indy. He was able to keep track of the guy that switched with him, to make sure, he came back OK. And he did. Jimmie did very well in the army & matured greatly. He came out of the army a Specialist 5 & didn't have to go to Vietnam. Jimmie was able to finish college on the GI Bill.

Lorenzo Delgado: Lorenzo served in the South Pacific first on the ship U.S.S. San Francisco and then transferred to the U.S.S. Bernard. The ship was a troop transport ship that went to Wake Island, Philippines, Hiroshima, and Midway Island. He was a watertender 3rd class, being responsible for tending to the fires and boilers in the ship's engine room. Lorenzo served 4 years. Banner sponsored by Monica Delgado and Family.

Suzano Delgado: Born August 11th, 1925, Suzanno was a private in the US Army enlisting in December 1943. He served in Germany and France in WWII. He was wounded in France, September 1944 and received 2 Purple Hearts. Banner sponsored by Monica Delgado and Family.

Moris E. Dell: Navy WWII Shopkeeper SK-2. Three years of service.

Henry James Dick: Army, 1st Lieutenant, WW l**.** He was born in 1891 in Burrton, KS, was raised there until he joined the United States Marine Corp in 1908. During his service in the Marines he was an orderly for an Admiral of the Pacific Theater, and traveled throughout the Pacific, China and Russia. He returned to Kansas and employment in Emporia with the Santa Fe Railroad in 1913. When the United States entered World War l in 1917, he enlisted in the Army and was sent to France where he entered Officer's Candidate School, was commissioned and assigned to 131st Infantry. He was in heavy combat, and "on August 9,1918, near Chipilly Ridge, France, although wounded, he rushed a machine-gun nest that was causing heavy casualties. He captured 5 of the enemy and seeing some enter a dugout, he followed, capturing 12 more Germans and 3 machine guns. His bravery was an inspiration to his men". This account is taken from the War Department records for which he received the Distinguished-Service Cross, Purple Heart, medals and commendations from France and England. After the war he resumed his life in Emporia working for the Santa Fe as a conductor. Banner sponsored by his son, William J. Dick.

M Ira Dodds: Corporal with the 1st Marines. Entered bootcamp Labor Day weekend Sept 3rd, 1951.

John Doxon: John was a student at Emporia State Teachers College when he answered his country's call. He was inducted into the Army on August 25, 1942 at Fort Leavenworth, KS. Following the pattern of many World War II couples, John and Venda Leigh Hunter were married on September 2, 1942 before he began his duties.

In March 1943, John completed training at the Engineers Officer Candidate School with the Corps of Engineers at Fort Belvoir, Virginia. He later attended Ordinance Maintenance School in San Antonio, Texas. As a 2nd Lieutenant, John served as a General Service Engineer Unit Commander. His overseas service began in February, 1944, when he was sent to the Mediterranean Theater. As a 1st Lieutenant, he served as a Combat Engineer Unit Commander. He supervised construction of trestles and bridges, constructed and repaired military highways, supervised demolition work and cleared mine fields in the Italian Theater. He also participated in the invasion of Southern France, where he continued to do road repair and mine removal, now with the invading forces; sometimes in front of and sometimes with the Infantry. John received European, African, and Middle Eastern Service medal with four battle stars and bronze arrowheads.

John also served in Alsace-Lorraine, Austria, and Germany. He returned home in July, 1945, to enjoy thirty days leave time before reporting to train for the Pacific Theater. September brought the end of the War in Japan, and John's Army duties came to an end in December, 1945. With love and pride, we thank him for his service. Banner sponsored by Jo Ellen Dambro.

Charles William Edington: Charles joined the National Guard on December 12,1948, one month before his 18th birthday, He became a member of the 127th Field Artillery Unit from Burlington KS. He was discharged on July 15,1950. He enlisted in the Army on March 5,1951 entering active service in Kansas City, MO. During his service he spent 11 months and 27 days in active service in Korea. He served in the 10th Quartermaster Company in the 10th Infantry Division from Fort Riley. He was stationed at Ch'orwon Korea. He was discharged on March 5,1954 at the rank of Sergeant. On July 12,1954, he enlisted again in the National Guard as a member of the 137th Infantry Company B. He retired from the military service on July 11,1960 at the rank of Sergeant First Class. Thanks for you service Dad. We love you and miss you. Banner sponsored by Rhonda Mercer.

Ernest Edie: Army-Sergeant Korean War 1950-1952. The Edie family is very fortunate to have many letters dated from October 1950 thru May 1952 that Ernie Edie wrote to his parents while he was serving in the Korean War. The quotes are excerpt from those letters. Ernie Edie was a helicopter mechanic in the Korean War. When he was in Eta Jima, Japan he took a twelve week course in the radio operators school. Letter dated March 19, 1951: "We finished our first day of school. It's a bitch I'm telling you, that Morse code will drive you crazy. You got to learn it by sound only. You don't have time to think." "This course we are taking is a thirty-two week course cut down to twelve weeks. So you can see they will push us through."

Another letter revealed the sad aftermath of the Hiroshima atomic bomb that was dropped on August 6, 1945. Letter dated April 1, 1951: "We got off yesterday afternoon and went on a trip over to Hiroshima where the Atomic bomb was dropped. It sure was a sight. The most of it fixed up again. Right where the bomb went off, they got it fenced off just to let the people see what it done. It sure blowed the hell out of the place. We went to the Hiroshima Red Cross Hospital to see some of the people that are in there yet from the blast. It beat anything I ever seen. Some of the burns the people had and the way their skin was all dried up. Some can't bend over the skin on their backs is all drawed up. Some can't bend their arms, it was a hell of a mess."

After the war Ernie returned home to Emporia. He took a job as an engineer for Panhandle Eastern. Ernie never married. He was an avid hunter and fisherman and loved to take his two nephews with him on these outings. Ernie was born March 8, 1927 and died July 10, 1981. Banner sponsored by Judy Edie

Robert C Edmiston: Captain Naval Civil Engineer Corps, 1962-1989. Captain Robert (Bob) C. Edmiston, a native Kansas farm boy, enlisted in the Navy during his last year of college in 1962. He married Jackie Worrell September 1, 1962 and they raised four children during his Navy career.

During his 26 plus years of active duty, Bob and his family were stationed in numerous locations including two years in the Mojave Desert, California, two years in Eleuthera, Bahama Islands, one year in Sugar Grove, West Virginia, and three years in Panama City, Florida. He also spent one year in Vietnam. He went to Saudi Arabia several times to assist the Saudi Arabian Navy in establishing military bases in the country. He was commanding officer in the Davisville Sea-Bee Base in Rhode Island. The remainder of his Navy career was spent in various locations on the east coast.

After the Navy, Bob worked as a civilian for ten years. Bob and Jackie returned to Kansas and now reside in Emporia. Bob spends most of his days working on the family farm where he grew up. Banner sponsored by Dean and Karla Edmiston

David Eldridge: I met Richard Houghton in a freshman speech class at KSTC (ESU) in the fall of 1958. We became good friends. I was rushed by his fraternity, Sigma Theta Epsilon, and in the spring of 1959 became "brothers". That same spring we were accepted into the Marine Officer Training Program. At the spring 1962 KSTC commencement we received our diplomas and, in our Marine Corps dress whites, and were commissioned 2nd Lieutenants. It was a proud and exciting occasion.

That summer I began basic school training to become as infantry officer. Richard started flight school to pursue his love of flying. Our paths would cross a few times until the spring of 1964. I was stationed at Camp Pendleton and Richard at MCAS El Toro. Ann, my new bride, Richard, and I would enjoy many fun times together.

In May of 1964 my battalion shipped off to Okinawa. The Vietnam war was stirring so most of our time was spent afloat in the South China Sea. In September of 1964 I commanded Company E that flew into Danang to provide perimeter security for the strategic airbase located there. It was the first Marine infantry company to deploy to Vietnam.

In the spring of 1965 Richard's squadron deployed to Japan. As luck would have it, my return flight to the station in May stopped in Japan. Richard and I were able to spend a couple of hours catching up. Until his departure for Japan he looked after Ann and our son Jeff who I had not yet seen! It was two hours together I'll never forget and forever cherish.

Shortly after arriving home I received the devastating news Richard and his RIO were killed in a training accident flying his F-4 Phantom jet over the Sea of Japan. Richard will always hold a special place in my heart. We were proud to serve our country and agreed many times that joining the Marines was one of the best decisions we ever made. Semper Fi. Banner sponsored by Steve and Char Miller and Ann Eldridge.

Wesley Epp: Coast Guard, 1942-1946

Thomas W Fallen: Thomas was living in Martin's Ferry, Ohio when he joined the Army in April of 1942. He completed his Army basic training at Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri. Tom was a sergeant assigned to "F" Company, 1st Infantry Regiment, which was part of the 6th Infantry. He served as an infantryman in the Pacific and saw heavy fighting in New Guinea and in Luzon in the Philippines. Tom had medical issues and an educational opportunity that would have exempted him from serving in combat, but he turned down both so he could stay with his unit. Another interesting aspect of Thomas Fallen's service is that he purchased a Kodak Brownie camera while at Ft. Leonard Wood and carried it with him throughout the war, photographing everyday camp life of ordinary soldiers. Those photos were published in the book, *The First Infantry Regiment in World War II*, written by Tom's son, Ray Fallen (a Vietnam Veteran).

At the war's end, the 1st Infantry Regiment had been in continuous combat with enemy forces for a record 219 days. Tom and his regiment stayed on after fighting ceased, serving "occupation duty" in Korea. When he returned to the states, Tom and his wife Charlotte settled in Kansas City, Missouri where he worked as an accountant until his death in 1982. Thomas and his wife Charlotte had four children– Jerry Fallen, Ray Fallen, Mary Anne Kretsinger, and Ruth Fallen Mason.

"Our 'secret weapon' of this war is the infantry– the weapon about which we have talked the least and on which we depend the most."- Stephen T. Early (Secretary to Franklin D. Roosevelt) Banner sponsored by Mary Fallen Kretsinger

Jose L Feliciano: Jose was born May 16th, 1939 in Puerto Rico. He moved to New York CIty at age nine. At the age of 17, during October 1956, Jose joined the Air Force. He stated that the most memorable assignment was served in Thailand from 1969 to 1970 as a Flight Chief Aircraft Mechanic, working on F-4 jets to perform in the Vietnam War. During his service, he was an Aircraft Field Technician for F86D, F-102, F-4, and RF-4. After 29 years of service, Jose retired with the rank of Senior Master Sergeant. During retirement, he continue his passion for airplanes working with Boeing, Beechcraft and Raytheon, which landed him in Wichita Kansas-where he calls home. He is very proud to have served his country. Banner sponsored by Jose L Feliciano Jr and Family.

Thomas Jefferson Fleming: Thomas was mustered into the Civil War as a Private in Captain Delphus Torry's Company D, 20th Regiment Iowa Volunteers Infantry. Colonel Wm E Dye was the commanding officer. This group was the first to respond in their patriotic ardor under who quickly recruited the counties of Scott and Lynn. The engagements this group were in was Prairie Grove, Arkansas; Fayetteville, Arkansas; Siege of Vicksburg; Yazoo City, Mississippi; Sterling Farm, Morganzea, Louisiana; Siege of Mobile, Alabama; Spanish Fort and Fort Blakely, Alabama. The regiment sustained a loss of 172 officers and men. At Prairie Grove, Arkansas, Thomas became sick and stayed at a home in the town. He was taken prisoner and sent to Little Rock, Arkansas, then to Helena, Arkansas, then to Benton Barracks in St. Louis, Missouri where he was exchanged. Thomas was then sent to Mobile to join his group. After returning to Iowa he received an honorable discharge at Clinton, Iowa.
While he was away his mother, Phoebe Bates Grant married a man whose last name was Fleming. Thomas, whose last name was originally Grant, decided to change his name to Fleming. (It was not unusual for soldiers after the Civil War to change their last names) Thomas was the Marshall at Emporia for about 18 years dating from the late 1870's. Thomas was married at Strong City, Kansas, to Sarah Ann Clay, on September 10,1889. She had been born in Lancaster, Pennsylvania in 1862. One story about him– if he found a man drunk he would approach the man from behind and give him a good boot in the rear and send him home. That kept a man from having to spend the night in jail. After his days of acting as marshall, he and a friend engaged in a livery and drayage business in a firm known as Fleming and Potter. The firm was in Emporia on 5th Ave just west of Commercial St about 1/2 block on the north. Banner sponsored by Marian S. (Choate) Stuart.

Robert James Foncannon: "Bob" Foncannon enlisted in the US Army in November 1942 and proudly served his country as a rifleman in the 3rd Infantry Division, Seventh Army through November of 1945. During that time, he was deployed in Italy, France and Germany. He was wounded in action twice and was awarded the purple heart. While his squad was on patrol in France in the Colmar Pocket they came upon a farm house. The owner, a French woman who later betrayed them, told the Americans to hide in her barn to avoid the advancing German Tiger Tanks. Bob, the squad leader,and some of his "guys" hid in the hayloft, the others down below. Those below lost their lives when the Germans sprayed the lower level of the barn with machine gun fire. The soldiers in the hayloft survived, surrendering only after being outgunned by the Germans. Bob was held as a German Prisoner of War under Stalag 13 for 5 months in 1945 until he was liberated by American soldiers. After he was liberated, Bob searched for a particular German guard from the prison camp who knocked him down a stairwell, hoping for a chance to settle the score. He never did find that guard, but he never forgot him either. Sponsored by Stephen Foncanon (in memorium), Cathy Foncannon, Janet Foncannon Werner, Bob Foncannon Jr, Ceilly Foncannon Robl.

George W Ford: United States Air Force Master Sergeant September 1940 to January 1946. George joined the Air Force in 1940 and went by train to Fort Riley, where he was given a physical, dental exam, lots of shots, an Army haircut, and his first uniform. He was sent to McChord Field in Tacoma, Washington where he was a "yardbird" and was paid $20 a month. He was training in automotive armaments bomb dump and administration. This was to determine which area he was most qualified for. He was then assigned to the motor pool.

He was sent to Springfield, Massachusetts to Ordinance school for a machinist course. War was declared while he was there. When he returned to Tacoma he was put in second in command of the motor pool. After he was promoted to Staff Sergeant he was in charge of the motor pool. After 2 1/2 years he was sent to the Naval Training Station at Cottington Point, Rhode Island for training in Aerial torpedoes. Next he went to Elgin Field, Florida and spent 18 months experimenting with torpedoes. He was made master sergeant while there. In October 1944, he was sent to China by way of India as a replacement for the motor pool sergeant. George enjoyed his experiences in China and was able to stand on the Great Wall of China. He was shipped back to the states and received his discharge at Laughrey Air Force Base from the United States Air Force as Master Sergeant. Banner sponsored by J Patrick Ford.

Robert Fowler: Robert was born December 27, 1931 in Emporia, KS. He married Iona Fay Jones, October 14, 1951. Enlisting in the Army in January of 1952, he served in Korea from January 1952-1954. He had Airborne Training and was with the 92nd FA Battery (SH) APO8 and ran the spotlight. He was honorably discharged with the rank of Sergeant with 2 Overseas Bars, 2 Bronze Service Stars, and a Good Conduct Medal. Robert passed away August 17, 1989. "My father made my dreams come true"- Cynthia Kuhn.

Clarence Frye: Clarence “Frenchie” Frye, from Lebo, KS, was on a delayed enlistment an entire year before he actually entered Navy boot camp on June 15, 1978. With intentions of only serving his initial six year commitment, Frenchie attended Basic Electricity and Electronics, and Firecontrolman School in Great Lakes, IL. In the Navy, Firecontrolmen are responsible for maintenance and troubleshooting of search radars, missile and gun systems aboard ships. Frenchie attended many of these schools during his career, including SPS-48 search radar, Harpoon and Tomahawk missile systems and MK-86 gun radar schools. He also served four years as a Navy Instructor for the Tomahawk system, specializing in data storage device and launcher training. As a Firecontrolman, he served on three ships, USS SOUTH CAROLINA (CGN-37), USS COMTE DE GRASSE (DD-974) and USS ANZIO (CG-68), and made three deployments to the Middle East and the Mediterranean Sea.

After attaining the coveted rank of Master Chief Petty Officer (E-9), Frenchie was accepted into the Command Master Chief Program, where he served as the senior enlisted advisor to the Captains of three ships, including the Destroyer USS DEYO (DD-989), Amphibious Assault Ship USS WASP (LHD-1), Nuclear Aircraft Carrier USS HARRY S TRUMAN (CVN-75), and a major Navy Region in Norfolk, VA. Deployments as a Command Master Chief include two Mediterranean and two Iraqi Freedom deployments to the Persian Gulf. During his 30 year Navy career, Frenchie served 18 years aboard ship where he visited over 30 countries on seven major deployments. Banner sponsored by Marla Frye.

Earl A Giffin: Army, 1941-1944

Stephen Gilman: Charles Stephen "Steve" Gilman enlisted in the U.S. Army in April 1942 at the age of 31. He had grown up in Quincy and Madison in Greenwood County and graduated from Kansas State Teachers College (now Emporia State University) in 1933 with a degree in English. At the time he enlisted, he worked at a newspaper office as a printer. During World War II he served at Cold Bay, Alaska. Upon arrival there, while riding the bus from the ship to the camp at Cold Bay, the soldiers were asked, "Are any of you able to type?" Steve was the only one who raised his hand. Thus, he served as the company clerk.

In August of 1945, Steve was on a ship en route to Saipan when the war was declared over. After his discharge, he returned to Madison and eventually purchased the Madison News and became its editor and publisher. He married Frances Nuessen King in 1954, and they were the parents of six children. He died on Sept. 1, 2012, at the age of 100. Banner sponsored by MaryLeigh Dyck

Harold (Bud) Arnold Ginter: Harold was born December 23, 1923, on his home place five miles east of Dover, Kansas, to Fred and Ella (Arnold) Ginter. He was one of twelve children. Harold served in the Navy for 29 years, 2 months, and 29 days, with 20 of those years being in active duty. Harold’s date of entry into active service was on February 17, 1941, at U.S. Naval Air Station in Alameda, California. He remained active until 1947. He then enlisted in the Navy Reserves and served until 1956 when he again enlisted in active duty until 1970. He finished his final year, 1971, in the Navy Reserves. His final rank was MMC, Master Mechanic Chief. One of his first letters home was shortly after he enlisted in 1941, and he wrote about being aboard the USS Vestal, a repair ship, headed to Pearl Harbor. His ship was anchored to the USS Arizona on that dreadful day on December 7, 1941. The USS Vestal was hit, but stayed afloat. One can only imagine what ran through his mind at a young age of 17.His service papers state through the years he served on the USS Vestal, USS APc #27, USS Briscoe APA-65, USS Harwood (DD-861), USS Alvin C. Cockrell (DE-366), and USS Sterett (DLG-31).

Harold met Katsuyo Ishida in Sasebo, Japan, and the two were married on January 5, 1970. They had one son in 1972, Rickie Arnold Ginter, who lives in Olpe, Kansas. Harold earned the following ribbons and medals while proudly serving in the U.S. Navy: American Defense 1 Star, Asiatic Pacific 3 Stars, American Area, World War II Victory Medal, Philippine Liberation, Good Conduct Medal (Sixth Award), National Defense Service Medal (Second Award), Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal (Korea), Vietnam Service Medal (01 Silver Star), Vietnam Campaign Medal (with device). Harold Ginter, MMC, died on October 27, 1982, at the age of 58, and is laid to rest in Dover, Kansas.

Delmas C. Goldsberry: Delmas was born and lived his entire life in Emporia. In 1944 he enlisted in the U.S. Army, leaving his wife, Dorothy and a one-year old daughter, and awaiting the birth of a second child. He was classified a Rifleman in the "Fighting" Seventh Infantry Division, 32nd Infantry Regiment. His service was in the Pacific Theatre where he fought in The Philippines and then landed on Okinawa on "L Day," April 1, 1945. After the signing of the peace treaty, his unit was reassigned to Korea and patrolled the 38th Parallel, Russian border. He received his Honorable Discharge in 1946 and returned home to Dorothy and his two daughters.

Delmas was a carpenter and then contractor, building numerous homes in Emporia. He later retired from building and started Goldsberry Real Estate, helping others find homes in the town he enjoyed so much. Our Mother still lives in Emporia. Our Father died in 1988 at the age of 72 and to this day each of us misses this man who was an honorable person and a wonderful father. We thank him and all the Veterans whose service has kept our country safe. Banner sponsored by Sally Overstreet, Connie Christ, Jim Goldsberry, Steve Goldsberry.

Carl Leroy Good: Carl Good was born on July 3, 1919, in Kansas. He loved farming the rich soil and working with horses. An opportunity to run a ranch was offered to him, but before he could get started, he received his "Greeting" to be drafted into WWII. Since farming was important to the war effort, he could have stayed and worked, but he left to serve the country he loved.

Carl was placed in the 3rd Division, 7th Infantry, Cannon Company as a jeep driver. On November 8, 1942, he landed on the bloody beaches of North Africa under the command of Major General George S. Patton. They moved through North Africa and upon securing it, they prepared for a second amphibious landing into Sicily on July 10, 1943. Less than a week after landing, Carl was captured by the enemy. The men with him were killed, but he was taken prisoner. With General Patton and General Truscott moving across Sicily, he was moved under enemy control to different POW camps throughout Sicily and Italy.

Although injured in one of the POW camps in Italy, an opportunity for a mass escape came in September 1943. Carl was weak and starved, but he escaped into the mountains of Italy. He ended up staying with one other escapee near the municipality of Monte San Martino. Some Italian farmers helped them survive the hunt of the German soldiers and Italian Fascists, the cold, and hunger for over nine months before they made it back to Allied lines in June 1944. On August 2, 1944, they made it back to the U.S.

One of Carl's grandchildren retraced his war journey through interviews, a memoir that was written in 1945, history books, other personal accounts, Army Morning Reports, and lots of research over a period of eight years. To follow Carl's experiences and the history that with them, you can read the book *Captured by the Enemy* by Crystal Aceves. It was published in 2015 and won an honorable mention from the Hollywood Book Festival in the category of general non-fiction. Banner sponsored by David Good and Family.

Walter L. Graham: Walter Logan Graham enlisted in the Army in July, 1942. Hoping to get into the Army Air Force, he studied aerial gunnery and also trained as a bombardier. After completing flight training, he received his pilot wings in November 1943 and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army. Following B-17 flight training he was assigned to the 388th Heavy Bombardment Group, Third Bomb Division, 8th Air Force in the European Theater. The Third Bomb Division was commanded by General Curtis LeMay, and General Jimmy Doolittle was the Eighth Air Force commander.

Flying out of bases in England, each B-17 had a crew of 10: two pilots, a bombardier, a navigator, an engineer-gunner, and five additional gunners. Targets were primarily German airfields and aircraft factories. Graham's group usually consisted of 24 planes, flying in formation with two more groups of 24 planes each. Most missions were 4 to 5 hours, although occasionally some lasted up to 13 hours. Graham said they always expected to encounter strong German fighter opposition as soon as they crossed the English Channel. He personally flew over Berlin six times. He also participated in the fighting on D-Day. The B-17s' mission that day was to support the group troops by bombing along the landing area and hitting inland targets where ever possible.

Walter Graham flew 31 missions in roughly seven or eight months and was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross. In July, 1944 he rotated back to the states. He was promoted to First Lieutenant and served for a while as a flight instructor, until he accumulated enough points under the Army point system to be released from active duty. He joined the Reserves and was active for about 10 years, after which he went on inactive status. He retired from the Air Force in December. 1981 after a total of 39 years, retiring with the rank of Major. Banner sponsored by Doris Graham .

Billie E. Greenwood: Eureka, KS, enlisted in the Army on July 10, 1943. At the onset of WWII he served in Germany, reaching the rank of Corporal. He was shipped overseas on the Queen Mary (Gray Ghost) to his assignment. Billie passed away February 15th , 2015 at the age of 89. Banner sponsored by Linda McClintick, Jane OConnor, Susan Sommer, and their families, and his wife Martha Greenwood.

Charles Greig: "Charlie" was drafted into the Army in 1968. He went to basic training, infantry training and non-commissioned officer school before receiving orders to Vietnam. Charlie was a squad leader while serving in Vietnam. Those who served under him report that he was a natural leader and the worse the situation, the more calming and reassuring he became. Charlie maintains a relationship based on that comradery to this day. Charlie was nicknamed "Ranger" because of his ability to know what was required, and the willingness to fulfill that requirement regardless of the challenge or difficulty. Charlie came home from Vietnam and did exactly what the veterans from the "Greatest Generation" did. He went to work, started a family, and became a good citizen. Charlie never anticipated nor did he seek a thank you for that service. It was his duty and his honor. That was enough. Charlie became very active in the American Legion. He has held several positions in his post and is a constant funeral service volunteer to honor the area veterans that pass. Charlie Greig is known to be quick with his wit, but even more quick with his generosity of time, volunteerism and effort on behalf of his friends and his family and those that have served America in the Armed Forces.

Dale Dee Grimsley: Dale was delivered by Dr. Albert Beam, a local country doctor, in the family farmhouse on Allen Creek three miles east and one mile north of Americus. It was a chilly evening and close to midnight when the squirming baby arrived. His older sister Winifred Grimsley Gatewood, declared that he arrived on December 7th, 1931, but Dr. Beam didn't fill out the birth certificate until February of 1932. He inadvertently wrote December 8 in stead of December 7. Dale was the 6th child and the 4th boy born into what was to become a family of 5 boys and 2 girls, plus his father, John William Grimsley and his mother, Anna Marie Christensen Grimsley. Dale spent a childhood fairly typical of farm life in the 30's. He had opportunities to milk cows, feed hogs, work horses and help his mother with pens of chickens. It wasn't all work, however, there was time for fishing in Allen Creek, hunting quail, ducks and geese as well as playing baseball with his family. His older brother Ross Albert Grimsley became a professional baseball player. He ended his career pitching for the St. Louis Cardinals. Years later, Ross's son, Ross Albert Grimsley II, commonly known as Butch, would be a left handed pitcher for Cincinnati, Baltimore, and Montreal. Dale was a pitcher for local town teams. At tournament times, many town teams would ask him to pitch for their teams , which he would do as time allowed. Basketball was another sport in which he excelled. After completing eight years of school in Wheeler District #42, Dale entered the Americus High School from which he graduated in 1949. After one year at KSTC, he began working at the Cessna Aircraft Company in Wichita. Shortly after that transition, a letter was received from the United States President Harry Truman asking for his services in the Korean Conflict. Dale's entry into the Army occurred in Kansas City, Missouri, on January 23,1952. From there it was to Ft. Leonard Wood, Missouri, Camp Breckenridge, Kentucky, Fort Hood, Texas, and then it was to a ship at Pier 5 in Seattle, Washington. The ship stopped in Yokahama, Japan, where the soldiers boarded a boat to Korea. Dale was wounded on Pork Chop Hill, July 6, 1953, and spent ten days in a hospital after which he returned to Company H, 32nd Infantry , 7th Infantry Division. His rank on July 3, 1953, was Sergeant and his branch was Combat Medic. Medals awarded to Dale were: Korean Service Medal with two bronze stars; National Defense Service Medal; United Nations Service Medal; Combat Medical Badge; Good Conduct medal; and Purple Heart, July 6th , 1953. His separation date from the Army was January 13, 1954, in Camp Carson, Colorado. After his discharge, he returned to the Cessna Aircraft Company, where he was working when he was drafted, until KSTC started classes in the fall. He enrolled as an Industrial Technology student as this was what the Kuder Preference Test showed was his strong interest. After student teaching at Roosevelt High School and graduating in 1957, Dale began a teaching career for the next 22 years when he taught secondary and elementary levels, served as principal, coached basketball, baseball, and track. He added two masters degrees and elementary teaching certification to his educational fields. After changing his career path, he worked as an engineer at Dolly Madison where, among other duties, he fabricated the Bear Claw Machine. With no hope in sight to be on the day shift, Dale changed his career path again and began building houses. He completely renovated the house in which he now lives with his wife of 57 years, Belle, whom he married on Valentine's Day in 1959 at the First Presbyterian Church in Emporia. While Dale and Belle were teaching at Kendall, their daughter, Lendi Lea Grimsley, was born in the Donahue Memorial Hospital, Syracuse, Kansas on September 9, 1961. Today, Lendi Bland PhD. And her husband Paul Bland PhD. are professors in the Education Department at ESU. A delightful time occurred on November 25, 1991, when his older grandson, Joel Grimsley Bland, arrived and another joyful event happened when his second grandson, Samuel Bartholomew Bland was born August 12,1994. Joel, after graduating from K-State with a double major in Electrical Engineering and Spanish, works with the Fischer Company in Marshalltown, Iowa, while Sam is finishing a dual degree in Art and Education at ESU. In his retirement years, Dale totally enjoys his family and can be found watching a variety of sporting events, political propaganda programs, and ESU sporting events– especially basketball. Banner sponsored by Belle Grimsley and Family.

Joel Gutierrez: Air Force Airman 1st Class 810 Motor Vehicle Squad. Enlisted in 1950 and two weeks later the Korean War started. He was in Korea and Japan for a year. Joel was awarded the Korean Service Medal, 2 Bronze Stars, United Service Medal, Good Conduct, and the National Defense Service Medal. He was honorable discharged December 21st, 1953. Banner sponsored by Lupe Gutierrez.

Glen Haag: Born 10-29-25 to 11-20-13, Olpe KS. Army during WWII, Technician 4th Grade Regular 1946-1948. Glen served in Berlin Germany and was a guard and transported officers and officials. Banner sponsored by Patty Jenkins, Leanne Haag, & Lois Cox

Edwin Conrad Hake: Air Force 2nd Lieutenant

Wendell Bud Hamman: Bud Hamman joined the army infantry during WWII at a young age and rose to the rank of Staff Sergeant. He fought across France and into Belgium receiving a Purple Heart for battle injuries, eventually being captured in the Ardennes forest during the "Battle of the Bulge." After several months as a prisoner in a German POW camp he was liberated and after the war he came home to his young wife, Bernadette, and started his family of seven children. He didn't speak often of the war but did let everyone know it was something he never wanted them to have to endure, while making sure they knew how lucky they were to have a warm dinner each night. After almost starving and freezing to death as a POW and during the war, he was never very picky about what he ate but made sure no one around him ever went hungry. Bud served his country with pride and was considered a true hero to his family and friends. Banner sponsored by Staci and Rick Hamman.

Richard L. Hanks: From Norwood, Missouri enlisted in the Marine Corps in 1952 and served 2 years active duty from 1952 to 1954 and reserve duty until 1960. He was a proud veteran of the Korean War, serving in Korea with the Weapons Company, 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines, 1st Marine Division from July 1953 to March 1954. After his service was completed, Richard moved back to Norwood, Missouri with his wife Wanda Raney Hanks. They moved to Arvonia, Kansas in 1962 where Richard worked as a farmhand for many years. They retired to Lebo, Kansas in 1991 where he lived until his death in 2011 at the age of 79. He is survived by his wife Wanda and their four children, Randall, Michael, Douglas and Marla, 10 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren. He was a member of the Lebo American Legion Post 323 and Emporia Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 1980. Banner sponsored by Marla Frye

Kenneth Harlan: T3 Sergeant

Claude Harris: Army Private 1st Class, Awarded the Bronze Star. Served in the Philippines, Hawaii, Korea, and Japan. Banner sponsored by Joni Hensley

James F. Harter: James was the retired Vice President of International Education at Emporia State University, where he worked for over 40 years. He passed away in Emporia, KS on February 20th, 2013. He was 70.

James was born in Bern, Kansas on January 22, 1943, the son of Sylvia and Howard Harter. He grew up in Bern with his 7 brothers and sisters including his twin brother Jerry. He was involved in Boy Scouts, high school band, musicals, and high school basketball. James graduated from Emporia State with a BSE in Foreign Language in 1965 and spent a year in Chile as a Fulbright Scholar. He then earned a MS in Master Teacher Secondary in 1968, and Ed.S. in Counselor Education in 1979. He received the Distinguished Alumni Award in 1992.

He was drafted into the Army in 1968 and served 13 months in Vietnam from 1969-1970 in Battalion B as a Specialist 5. He earned the Bronze Star Medal and Purple Heart. He came back home injured from a grenade on a cargo plane. When they landed in Fort Lewis Army Base in Pierce Washington he was laid on his back on the tarmac and called his aunt and uncle who lived in Tacoma Washington to pick him up. His aunt said when they saw him laying on the hard cement, they just cried and was worried for him. He was nursed well and came back home shortly thereafter. His job at ESU was secured when he left to Vietnam , so his first day in Emporia he was walking to work. He was almost on campus, near the clock tower, when an Anti-Vietnam War woman stopped him and insulted him with unbelievable language and spit in his face. Unfortunately, there were lots of incidents like this all over this country.

When he returned from Vietnam, he returned to his work at Emporia State as an International Student Adviser. Over the next 40 years, James spent his career working with students. He loved ESU where he called it a privilege to serve student faculty, and representatives of countries around the world. His passions led him to be involved with dignitaries in over 60 countries. He believed that peace in the world will be possible when we learn to coexist with each other, by learning to respect other cultures and their way of life. He loved sharing this passion with his students, faculty, friends and family.

James was a member of the First United Methodist Church, where he was a part of the choir for over 30 years. He also served on the Emporia Friends of the Zoo Board, was a member of Gardeners of America, National Association of Foreign Student Advisers, among many other organizations. Banner sponsored by his Family.

Melvin N. Hartig: 1st Sergeant E-8 129th Transportation Desert Shield/ Storm. 31 Years of Service

Ray Head: Ray Head was the father of two, grandfather of six and great grandfather of eleven. While serving in the Navy, his wife Doris took care of their children, Bonnie and Roy. Ray and Doris were married 58 years. They made their home in Milford, Ks. Ray went on to work at Fort Riley in civil service. Banner sponsored by Renee Kidd– Shivers

Deloy Heath: Deloy Heath was born October 30, 1913 and moved to Emporia when he was five years old. He attended the old Walnut School and graduated from Emporia High School. He majored in business at College of Emporia and co-owned an insurance agency first with John Hilton, and later with Gene Bloxom and John Korsak. He was in the Navy from March 1944 to February 1946. He was a communications officer with Adm. Nimitz's staff at Pearl Harbor.

Civic duties included the School Board, Justice of the Peace, Board of Directors of Columbia Savings, emporia Entertainment Series, First United Methodist Church Board, Community Center, American Legion VF, Country Club Board, Red Cross Drive chairman, Masonic Lodge, Eagles' Lodge, Girl Scout Council, Rotary Club, ESU Endowment Association.

He was married to Gertrude (Jim) Arnold Heath and had three daughters, Barbara Hassler, Helen Schmidt, and Emporian, Deanne Korsak. Banner sponsored by Deanne Korsak

Robert Hedges: Staff Sergeant, WWII, 4 Years of Service Banner sponsored by Mona McKernan

Rex Heinitz: Rex always wanted to be a Marine (probably because his brother was one and his whole family had served in some branch of the military.) He was in Vietnam in 1969-1970. The war was different depending when you were there. Heinitz served south of Da Nang with Hotel Company of the 2nd Battalion of the 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division A Company. They did a lot of jungle patrols trying to engage the enemy. Instead the Viet Cong fought with booby traps. Especially 'box mines' buried in the ground and when one stepped on it the foot would sink and trip the wire. The solder would lose at least a foot or up to both legs. One day on patrol, his Sergeant stepped on one and his foot missed the trip wire. Rex crawled over and unlaced the boot and held it until he could ease his foot out and jump out of the way. Rex got a battlefield commendation for this. Rex walked through a cleared field that was being shelled, rather than risk being the next guy to step on a mine!

Even though he was not a medic, he carried IV bottles and tubing with him at all times. He put several men on choppers alive because he started IV's on them. He treated a sucking chest wound with the cellophane from his pack of cigarettes! (The only good thing from Uncle Sam's cigarettes in the ration packs!) Marble mountain was on their patrol. It rose about 400 feet with a huge Buddha in front of a cave. Rex wanted to see what was in the cave but could not get anyone interested. Years later, an article he was reading revealed the North Vietnamese had a division-size hospital underground! The whole time he was in-country was dirty, wet, and dangerous. At one time he was 90% covered with 'ring worm.' Once in the rainy season, he woke up from finally getting warm, with a wharf rat asleep on his chest! They were 'cat sized' and he had seen three of them take down a pig and eat it. Not impressed with the sleeping companion! Not a day went by without some thoughts of Vietnam for Rex. Decades later he would still have nightmares of fighting the VC. Banner sponsored by Deb Heinitz

Fletcher Helton: Fletcher joined the Army National Guard in 1939. He trained to be an Aircraft Mechanic. When WWII began he was assigned to the Army Air Corps. Fletcher was transferred to England in 1942 as a crew chief on the B-17s. He was brought back to the U.S. to be trained on the B-29s. Master Sergeant Helton was appointed to the General's Staff to accompany the B-29s to Guam. His assignment was to coordinate the bombing missions that helped end WWII. After five years of service, he returned to Kansas and his beloved Gwendolyn. Banner sponsored by the Sally Helton Anderson Family

Manual Hernandez: Manuel Hernandez was drafted to by the Army right out of high school at 19. He was then sent to boot camp at Ft. Lenordwood in Missouri, then he was stationed in Ft.Seal, Oklahoma for a short time, then sent to Ft.Irvin California where after a few weeks of training in the desert he was given his final orders and was sent to Vietnam. There he would be assigned to a unit and was a Army Private 1st Class (PFC) assigned to the Artillery Division.

Manual was sent to South Vietnam near a city named Qui Non and would end up in the Battle they now call the "Operation Tet Offensive". This battle was set for 3 phases which ultimately lasted 9 months. There he would end up getting wounded and once healed sent right back out to battle. There he would finish out his tay before heading back home to Emporia, KS. His sacrifice for our country was not an easy journey, but he knows that it was worth all of it for the sake of his family. We are so proud of you and We Love You. Banner sponsored by Kathy Summers and Family.

Dale E. Hess-Dale enlisted in the United States Air Force on March 18,1959. He was sent to Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas for his basic training. He was then transferred to Chanute Field in Rantoul, Illinois for schooling in aircraft mechanics for KC-135's and B-52's. After graduation Dale was transferred to Blytheville Air Force Base in Blytheville, Arkansas where he attained the rank of Airman First Class (A1C).

While at Blytheville his main duties included being a mechanic for the KC-135 tanker, the B-47 bomber, and the B-52 bomber (BUFF). During this time the Cuban Missile Crisis came on and he and his fellow Airman spent many nights in the Alert Shack waiting for the call that would put their aircraft in the air. After Dale's honorable discharge from the Air Force he served two more years in the Air Force Reserves.

After his service Dale, his wife Wilma, and their children Janet, Barbara, and Robert moved to Madison, KS where he went to work for Didde Glaser in Emporia, KS. Later Dale owned and operated Skelly Service Station in Madison and then owned the Eureka Auto Parts store in Eureka, KS. Dale spent the last ten years of his life doing what he loved, being a farmer. He passed away on October 28, 1997. Banner sponsored by his son-in-law and daughter, Brad and Barbara Williams.

Russel "Cy" Howard Hewit Jr.: Cy was killed in action in Pleiku, South Vietnam on January 21, 1969. Russ was 25 and a SP4 in Delta Company, 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry. He was awarded the Bronze Star with V, Purple Heart and Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm Unit Citation.

Russel was born and raised in Seville, Ohio. He was born March 27, 1943 and attended Ashland University in Ashland, Ohio when he was drafted. Russ was married to Sally Rastorfer and is survived by a son, Rusty. Rusty followed his father's educational choice graduating from Ashland University. Seville,Ohio has dedicated the Cy Hewit Park to honor Russ' service to the United States.

Information from the 35th Infantry Regiment Association details Russ' heroism.
"Specialist Four Hewit's company was operating in the dense jungle near Chu Pa Mountain when it was subjected to intense rocket, mortar, and small arms fire from well concealed enemy positions. The initial barrage of enemy fire separated the point element from the remainder of the company. Reacting immediately to the crucial situation, Specialist Four Hewit dashed through the hail of enemy fire to an exposed position where he could place accurate fire on the enemy. His heroic actions enabled the point element to return to safety but as he attempted to reach a position of safety, he was mortally wounded. Specialist Four Hewit's courageous acts, aggressiveness, and exemplary devotion to duty are in keeping with the highest traditions of he military service and reflect great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army."

Russ' Vietnam Wall position is panel W34, line 49. Russ is buried at Seville Memorial Cemetery.
This banner and biography is submitted to further honor the memory of Russ "CY" Hewit as a friend, coworker at Wadsworth Brick, and fellow student at Ashland University. Submitted by Jim Stephens

Wade Hinds: Staff Sergeant 3rd Army, "Iron Men of Metz". Banner sponsored by Brenda Barrett

Steven L. Hollar: Steve graduated from Emporia High School in 1968, and joined the Air Force in 1969. His basic training took place at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas. After basic training, he was in Eglin AFB in Florida, Taiwan, Thailand, Nellis AFB in Nevada, and his last base was in Mountain Home, Idaho. His time in Thailand was on a reserve base during the Viet Nam War where he worked on planes.

The Air Force allowed Steve to travel and see the world, including places within the United States. He made many friends, some of which he lost during the War. Being in the service provided Steve with direction in his life. As many young people, he wasn't sure what he wanted to do after high school, and the Air Force was his answer. Steve loved the outdoors and was an avid hunter and fisherman. After his time in the Air Force, he settled with his family in Michigan where he loved ice fishing. Steve loved animals! Cats and dogs were just part of the family. He was a foreman at the F & S Carton Company in Grand Rapids, Michigan where he worked for about 35 years. When he discovered he had cancer and could not fish and hunt, he enjoyed watching birds at his birdfeeders, and the squirrels at the corn feeder through his sliding glass door. Steve died of cancer in 2012 surrounded by his loved ones and his beloved pets. Banner sponsored by Diana Hirt and Family.

John Holroyd: Technical Sergeant Oscar "John" Holroyd was a World War II top turret gunner with the infamous Jolly Rogers Bomb Group in the 5th Air Force. He flew over 60 missions in the Southwest Pacific, with 439 flight hours aboard a Jolly Rogers B-24 Liberator named the "Twin Nifties."

Sergeant Holroyd was decorated with the Air Medal and four Oak Leaf Clusters, and survived six attacks from Japanese forces.

In his flight log, he writes briefly about being attacked. An entry dated September 30, 1944 reads "…took off at 2 am to hit oil refineries in Borneo. Landed low on gas at Cape Sansopore at 5 pm. At about 11:45 am [earlier that morning] we were intercepted by 20 or 25 Zekes, Oscars, and Tonies. They shot down five of us. A navigator (Lt. Good) said he saw my bullets from the belly guns knock pieces off an Oscar below. Heavy attack over target. The fighting lasted 35 minutes. Most of our guns ran out of ammo or jammed. One of the planes in our formation went down exploding in water. Several bailed out and as soon as they left our formation, all the interceptors left us and went after them, striking their parachutes. If the interceptors had not left, we would perhaps have gone down as our guns were jammed and gas was very low. All planes in our squadron got shot up. One man got shot in the hip. This was the longest mission ever flown in formation by B-24's. Time: 17 hours, 35 minutes."

Sergeant Holroyd passed away in 1977, survived by seven children. Three of his sons attended Emporia State University and two were Vietnam veterans. His granddaughter is an ESU graduate and a business owner in Emporia. Thank you, grandfather, for your service and bravery. Banner sponsored by Tracy Holroyd.

William Joel Hudson: "In 1965 at 17 years old, I joined the United States Navy. I went to San Diego, California for basic training. After basic training I went to VA 125 LeMoore Naval air station, LeMoore, California. I worked on the flight line in LeMoore, guided planes in, and directed them to runways. From there I traveled to Memphis, Tennessee for schooling. I then was shipped to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. I worked in the supply department, drove a forklift, Duce, and a half truck. I also was on a swim and diving team and received medals for both diving and swimming. 40 years after returning home, a guy I was in basic training with contacted me, and came to visit. We had a lot of catching up to do. He spent 2 weeks with me. We built a 300 foot privacy fence. Shortly after that another guy who was stationed in Cuba with me also visited and stayed a week. We had a nice visit. A year later he passed away. I always wondered if he knew he was dying and was seeing old friends before he died." Banner sponsored by Karen Hudson and Family.

Richard C Jaggard: Richard was born in Emporia in 1949, graduated from Roosevelt High School in 1967, and was attending classes at ESU when his service number came up in March of 1970. He and Janice (Wygle) put together a quick wedding and held the small March ceremony in Batesville, Arkansas. Richard reported to basic training the next day at Ft. Leonardwood. His next stop would be in Panama for advanced training. After training he was shipped out to Cambodia with the final stop being Vietnam. Richard was promoted to Sergeant and spent a lot of time as radio operator, sticking close to those in command. He won 2 Silver Stars, a Purple Heart (surviving a helicopter crash and saving lives), and numerous awards and commendations. Richard did not speak a lot about the war, feeling it was his duty and it was a job that had to be done. He did start to talk in later years to Emporia School history classes, trying to give them a sense of the war. One of his scariest moments came when he was on point patrol and an enemy soldier stepped out in front of him. He and the soldier caught each other's eyes and neither pulled their gun. Richard would never know if the enemy would fire, because his patrol partner yards behind him shot and killed the enemy before either soldier could react. Richard lost his best buddy that he had made during basic training when they were laying side by side in a foxhole together and enemy fire took his friend's life. Sleeping at night was always an adventure. You had your choice of laying in water with snakes and other wildlife or hanging from tree branches to try and sleep. Richard and another buddy would take turns on "snake duty" to keep each other safe. Showers were another interesting time when you weren't in base camp, you would use the rain to start your shower, get all lathered up and then of course the rain would stop leaving you all soapy with no way to rinse off. Richard did enjoy the friendships he made during the war and still kept in touch with some until his death in 2010. He did talk about playing basketball back in camp and catching up with his buddies in the downtime. Even running into a hometown buddy in a mess tent in the middle of nowhere. He recognized the voice immediately and when he went to place a hand of the man's shoulder, who was a Ranger in the Army, he was tackled to the ground. Once his friend realized who he was, he picked Richard up and greeted him like the old friend he was. Richard would be discharged in April of 1971, going back to Emporia to start a family with his new wife Janice. He would work for Coca Cola as a delivery truck driver and then the City of Emporia as the Proshop Manager of the Emporia Municipal Golf Course. He and Janice would have one daughter Becky, a son in law, Smitty Smith and two grandchildren Garrison and Talia Smith. Richard passed away in January of 2010. Banner sponsored by Janice Jaggard and Becky Smith.

Richard C. James– Richard was born April 15, 1925 in Kansas City, Missouri. He moved with his family to Emporia in the 1920's when his father transferred for the Santa Fe Railroad. After WWII started, he wanted to sign up to fight but because of his age, he was turned down. He traveled to Ft. Lewis, Washington and enlisted in the US Army on August 3, 1943 at the age of 18. He trained at Nevada, Missouri and from there was sent to Europe and became a part of the 79th Infantry Division. He attained the rank of corporal while serving in the European Theater under the General George Patton. He would say of Patton, the "blood and guts" general, that is was his guts and their blood. His unit was in the 3rd wave of the Normandy invasion on June 6, 1944 and he would talk about the gummy sand that stuck to their boots which made it hard to run and also of the beautiful orchards they ran through. He was wounded in battle and when spending time in an English hospital he was mistaken for a German soldier which took awhile to correct!. He earned 2 purple hearts, 4 bronze service stars, a bronze star, good conduct medal, Victory WWII medal, European/ African campaign medal, and a national defense medal. He was honorably discharged in 1946 but was recalled to Korea on May 23,1949. While preparing to go overseas, he broke his leg and was released from duty on May 7, 1952.

After the war, he started his career with the Santa Fe Railroad in El Dorado and married Betty Joan McGehee on September 11, 1948, a marriage which lasted over 50 years. He transferred to Emporia in the 1970's and retired after 38 years in 1984. While working one day, he saw a two year old child on the railroad tracks playing. A train was coming and he and another worker ran to her and were able to pull her off in time and save her life. His family never knew of this act until years later when she found him and thanked him. Richard died on August 3, 2001 and is buried in the National Cemetery at Ft. Leavenworth, KS along with his wife Betty. He is survived by 5 children, 12 grandchildren and numerous great grandchildren. His 3 sons all served in the armed services: Richard C James, Jr, in the Navy during the Vietnam war, Gunnery Sgt, Johnny M. James in the Marines Corp retiring after 22 years which included time served in the first Iraq Gulf War, and Robert L. James, USAF Sgt. He also has 3 grandsons who have served in the armed services: Brian R. James, Marine Corps, Kevin M. James, Army Reserves, and Lt. Col. Chad R. James, who is currently on active duty as an USAF F15 fighter pilot and instructor pilot with stints in Korea and Iraq flying 110 missions over Baghdad, Lt. Col. James carries one of his grandfather's purple hearts with him every time he flies. Banner sponsored by the James Family.

Gary L. Janssen: Gary was born August 27, 1947 to Bing and Carol Janssen. He enlisted in the Army Reserves during the Vietnam War at the age of 19. Gary went to Basic Training at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, then traveled to Fort Lee, Virginia for AIT. While never having to leave the country to fight in the Vietnam War, he retells the story of a "coin flip" to determine which local unit would be deployed. Gary has stated he was fortunate his unit did not go because several were lost from the other unit. He served from 1967-1973, finishing his service as an E6 Staff Sergeant. A valuable life lesson he learned from his time in the military was the importance of working together as a team. After serving in the Army, Gary continued to serve his community as a fireman for the Parsons Fire Department where the skills he learned were put into practice. He retired his position as a Battalion Chief on April 1, 2000.

Gary married Joyce Peoples on July 15th,1966 and were blessed with three children, Sherri (deceased), David Janssen of Savonburg, Kansas, and Misty Lawson of Emporia, Kansas. Gary and Joyce raised their family in Parsons, Kansas. Although he still resides in Parsons, he frequently visits Emporia to see his family and support their activities in the community. Banner sponsored by Misty Lawson and family.

Roy Johnson: Roy A. Johnson was in the Air Force from December 1941 through September 1945. He was a Corporal in the Air Force and served as an armorer for the P-38 aircraft in the 49th fighter squadron. He was overseas for 25 months of the 45 months he served. Corporal Johnson loved his military family, loved Emporia and that Emporia was founding city of Veteran's Day.

Harold Leroy Jones: Dad was barely 20 when he went into the army. He looked even younger with his boyish face and slight build: 5'7" and 120 lbs. He was a sergeant in charge of a tank crew in the Battle of the Bulge during Hitler's desperate fight at the end of the war. Their tank took a direct hit and he was the only one that survived. He was in the turret. Physically he was unharmed, but walked away covered in the bone shards, blood, and hair of his crew. I only remember him as he came home. Others say he was very scarred emotionally by this experience. He had night terrors and was depressed and had trouble holding a job. He never wanted a position with authority over others for the rest of his life. Basically he was a loving, gentle man, but he made it a point to be extremely careful with alcohol. I think it brought out a violence in him that made him fear losing control. He died young, at least from my present perception as he was 72, my age now. My mother outlived him by 23 years. And he was one of the "lucky" ones. War is hell, which makes remembering those who suffered its effects ever so necessary. Banner sponsored by Jerilynn Henrikson and Family.

Vernon Justus: Vernon Dwight Justus, father of local Emporian Joyce Reynolds, proudly served his country in the Navy during the Korean War from 1952 through 1956. He was aboard the USS Maddox from April 1954 through November 1954. He then served at the US Naval Station in Adak, Alaska until January 1956. Vernon came to know his wife of 58 years, Shirley Justus, while in boot camp in California. He was serving with her Uncle Kenneth Wathen who showed him a picture of Shirley that she had sent him with a letter. Vernon began writing Shirley, and the rest as they say is history! Vernon and Shirley still happily reside in Gladstone, Missouri.

Charles Richard Kater: Dad was born Sept 19, 1931 In Newton, KS, where he grew up and graduated from Newton High School. He and Mom, Arliss Akers, were married July 22, 1951 in Newton. Eager to serve his country, he enlisted in the U.S.M.C. and on March 19, 1952 reported to Camp Pendleton, CA.

He served in Battery 1 3rd Battalion 12th Marines, where he was awarded as a sharp shooter. His was an artillery unit. Their job was to provide artillery reinforcement , and close continuous fire support. He would ship out in May 1953 and remain overseas until the following February. As our Grandmother wrote in her Bible: 'After serving eight months overseas, Richard landed back in the states on Feb 17, 1954. He received his discharge on March 10, 1954 in San Francisco, and arrived back in Newton on March 12, 1954 at 6:35.'

Mom and Dad had their first son on Dec 31, 1954. Another son and two daughters would follow. Dad would work as a carpenter and in the Lumber Business for nearly forty years. Home Lumber & Supply Co brought our family to Emporia in 1968, where he would stay until he retired.

Dad never really talked much about his service, he felt it was his duty. He did tell stories from time to time and made lifelong friends. We really enjoy going thru his many pictures. He was also known to march his young children to bed with Marine Cadence, which we loved! We are very proud of him!! Dad passed away on April 14, 1997 at age 65.

Banner sponsored by: Kevin Kater & Susan Turner

Billy Gene Keegan: Navy, 1946. "Bill" was born and raised in Gardner, KS the youngest of four boys. Times were tough in those days on the farm and Bill had to work rather than attend high school. When he turned 18 he joined the Navy, but was called home after seven months to be with his dying mother. Following his mother's death he was allowed a hardship discharge to work on the family farm as his father had no other means of income. Bill valued his short time in the Navy and was very loyal to veterans as a dedicated member of the American Legion in Gardner. Banner sponsored by Clint Kessler, Brett Kessler, Traci Gant, Abbey Kessler.

Douglas L. Kellison: Douglas joined the United States Army when he was 21. His basic & AIT training was in Fort Knox , Kentucky. He was then assigned to go to Swineford, Germany on border guard duty. He guarded the fence between East & West Germany for 2 1/2 years. Many of nights he had to capture people trying to cross and contain them until help arrived. After that he was sent to Fort Riley, Kansas. He then received an honorable discharge with 2 more years of non-active reserves to serve.

He was a Specialist E-4. His unit in Germany was the 3rd of the 7th Calvary.. Douglas served our country from March 1977 - March 1981. Banner was sponsored by his proud sons and their wives Derek & Jaime Kellison & Jeremy & Maria Kellison.

Terra Kern: Petty Officer Terra Kern, is an Aerographer's Mate 1st Class in the United States Navy. After attending boot camp at Recruit Training Command Great Lakes in 2008, she attended AG"A" school at CNATTU Keelser in Biloxi, MS. While on sea duty, assigned to Strike Group Oceanography Team located at Naval Air Station North Island, she served as a weather observer onboard the USS Makin Island for its maiden voyage around South America through the Strait of Magellan, to be homeported in San Diego. A full deployment followed onboard the USS Peleliu across the Pacific Ocean. The crew was temporarily stationed in the Gulf of Aden before being called away to assist with flood relief during the monsoonal flooding of Pakistan in 2010. After her sea tour was complete, AG1 returned to Biloxi to attend AG"C" school. Currently, Petty Officer Kern is a Forecast Duty Officer stationed at Fleet Weather Center-Naval Station in Norfolk, VA. The FWC provided flight weather briefings across the eastern United States and maritime weather support for ships navigating the Atlantic and Arctic Oceans and the Caribbean and Mediterranean Seas. Naval Station Norfolk is the worlds' largest Naval Station and one of the oldest in United States history.

Lawrence Kessler: Navy, Electricians Mate First Class, 1940 - 1947. "Larry" was born and raised in Gardner, KS the oldest of six children. Upon graduation from Gardner High School in 1939 he worked a short while before joining the Navy. He made the decision to become an electrician and after training was assigned to the submarine division. His submarine took him to many parts of the world including crossing the equator and he would tell of the days spent under water and the tight quarters. In 1943 his sub was between Midway and Pearl Harbor when he was called home to be with his dying mother. After his mother's death Larry remained in the states and finished his service after seven years. He was a loyal supporter of veterans, serving several posts with both the American Legion and VFW in Gardner. Banner sponsored by Clint Kessler, Brett Kessler, Traci Gant, Abbey Kessler.

John C. Kieffer: John joined the Army Air Corps on December 7, 1943 and received Basic Training in Amarillo, TX. He was a member of the 2nd and 8th Air Forces and Western T.T. (technical training) Command. While enlisted, he achieved the rank of SSgt, and flew 35 missions as tail-gunner on a B-17 aircraft. His missions involved battles in the North Appennines, Northern France, the Ardennes, and the Rhineland. He received honorable discharge on October 19, 1945. Banner sponsored by Mark and Cathy Runge

James Kinder: James came to Emporia from Moline, KS to go to school at the College of Emporia in the fall of 1950 because one of his high school teachers had gone to C of E. He got a job at Reeble's Grocery Store while in school. Jim planned on getting his masters degree after he finished his bachelors, but his boss talked him into staying with the grocery store. He would continue to work there until he retired. It was while working at Reeble's that he met his future wife Mary (Ann) Kennedy, who was a fellow employee. They were married on August 30th in 1953. Jim was drafted to the Army so they delayed their wedding date until his discharge. While in the Army, he was picked for leadership school. Everyone was overjoyed as that meant he wouldn't be sent overseas to Korea. Not that Jim would not have gone, he was very patriotic and loved his country immensely.

Jim and Ann were married July 17th, 1955. He was a wonderful husband and later father. He fathered two children (Larry and Debbie) who thought the world of him. He was a very positive, optimistic, resourceful, and talented man. He could fix anything. He could work on and repair computers, plumbing, appliances, light fixtures, etc. He remodeled several apartments among other things. Jim loved to read and kept his mind open and continued to enthusiastically learn how to do new thing (and fix them) even in his later years. He had strength in the face of adversity, and could do things that for others would seem impossible. He survived two years after a massive stroke, keeping his sense of humor throughout it all. He worked hard all his life, loved God, read many biblical books as well as the Bible. He taught his adult Sunday school class, and along with his wife were lay speakers for the church. He was an example of living the way God intended. Banner sponsored by Ann Kinder

Charles Richard "Dick" Koepke: Dick entered the United States Air Force in 1952. He spent 22 years in the Air Force, 18 of those years with the Strategic Air Command, piloting B47 and B-52 bombers. From June 1971 through June 1972 he served in Viet Nam and Thailand as Deputy Director of Munitions for the 7th Air Force, Ton Son Nhut Air Base, Viet Nam and later Commander, 635th MMS, Utapao Air Base, Thailand. He served as Detachment Commander, Kleine-Brogen, Belgium. He retires at Rhine-Main Air Force Base, Germany, in May 1974 with the rank of Colonel. Banner sponsored by Sylvia Koepke and Family.

John Korsak: Army Specialist 4th class, Vietnam 1968-1970 Banner sponsored by Deanna Korsak

William D. Kretsinger: William was a 1st Lieutenant in the 866th Engineer Aviation Battalion, a self-contained unit that became the foundation of aviation engineering services during WWII. He served as an Army engineer, assisting with the building of runways, bridges and docks in the South Pacific during the war. Bill was born and lived his entire life in Emporia, KS. He was the Lyon County Engineer for 30 years, in charge of keeping the 1,360 miles of county roads clear and in shape, and supervising the construction of bridges and culverts. Bill was the "Emporia Gazette Man of the Week" on February 8th, 1969. The article made note of the national recognition he received for changing to the use of weathering steel when replacing county bridges, a material that develops a coat of protective rust that eliminated the need for costly painting. The change provided Lyon County significant savings in the milling, fabrication and upkeep costs on the 330 county bridges. Bill and his wife, Kathryn Jane (Brockhouse) Kretsinger, had two sons, W. Brock Kretsinger and John D. Kretsinger, who continue to live in Emporia, KS. " The difficult we do immediately. The impossible takes a little longer"~ Motto of the US Army Corps of Engineers during WWII. Banner sponsored by Brock Kretsinger

Michelle Kriss: NAVY Commander, Civil Engineer Corps, Iraq Veteran 1992-2012 Commander (ret) Michelle Hitchcock Kriss, a native of Burlington, Colo., was commissioned an ensign, Civil Engineer Corps in 1992 through Officer Candidate School. She subsequently graduated Civil Engineer Corps basic course 200 in Port Hueneme, Calif. Her first assignment was Assistant Staff Civil Engineer at Naval Station, Guam. In 1994, Congress opened certain billets to women through a partial repeal of the Combat Exclusion Law. This paved the way for assignment to Naval Mobile Construction Battalion (NMCB) 74, Gulfport, Miss. During her time in NMCB 74, she deployed to Okinawa as the Bravo Company Commander and Haiti as the Material Liaison Officer on Operation Restore Hope Task Force. During her 20 year career, she made deployments to Okinawa, Haiti, Korea, Italy, Croatia, Seychelles, Kuwait and Iraq. During Operation Iraqi Freedom, she deployed to Iraq twice. Her first assignment was the Assistant Operations Officer of 1st Marine Expeditionary Engineer Group(MEG), consisting of 2,000 U.S. Army and Marine engineers and Seabees in Al Anbar province, providing engineering support before, during and after Battle of Fallujah. Additionally, she was appointed as MEG election officer, responsible for constructing safe polling facilities for Iraqi citizens throughout western Iraq.

After her first tour in Iraq, she was immediately assigned as the Executive Officer of Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 22 and deployed to Al Asad Air Base in western Iraq performing convoy security and construction operations for the 1st Marine Air Wing, Special Operations Command and the Iraqi Army. Additional assignments include: NMCB 24 Detachment Officer in Charge, NMCB 22, Alfa Company Commander, Aide to RADM Raymond Alexander, Operations Officer, Naval Forces Korea and Executive Officer, Maritime Partnership Program Det 118, Naval Forces Africa. CDR Hitchcock Kriss' professional education includes a bachelor of science degree in Civil Engineering from the Colorado State University, a master of business administration from the University of Oklahoma. She is a registered professional engineer in Mississippi. Her personal awards include the Meritorious Service Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (4), Joint Service Achievement Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (3) along with various unit commendations, and multiple campaign medals. She is also a qualified Seabee Combat Warfare Specialist and Fleet Marine Force Officer. She is married to Dr. Thomas Kriss, DDS and they have three children, Tayler (18), Tessa (16) and Emary (5).Banner sponsored by Tom Kriss.

Don C. Krueger: Born in Olpe, Kansas, proudly served in the United States Air Force from 1968-1972 as a Staff Sergeant. He began his military service at Norton Air Force Base in San Bernardino, California, and completed his duties in Goosebay, Labrador as a Medical Corpsman. After serving his country, he went on to earn his Law Degree from Washburn Law School in 1975 and practiced as a Criminal Defense attorney for 38 years, until his death October 3, 2012. Banner sponsored by Debbie O'Connor, Jarod O'Connor, and Shannon Presti.

David Lane: David is the first soldier from Emporia killed in Operation Iraqi Freedom.
From the time David was 14, he wanted to become a soldier. He had ear infections from the time he was 6 months old and when he was 12, he developed a cyst on his eardrum that destroyed one bone of hearing. In order to prevent the regrowth, he had repeated surgeries every 9 months. The goal was that if the surgeon saw no cyst, a titanium implant would be put in to restore his hearing. In the meantime, David was active in the Civil War and WW II reenactments. When he was 19, we received the welcome news when the surgeon came out. The titanium implant was put in. When finally released from precautions David said, "Mom, you do know where I am going to go, right?". Yes, I did. He joined the ARMY and went to Ft. Benning, GA for bootcamp. He was stationed at Ft. Riley and came home every weekend. He deployed in February 2007. During his 12 days home in April, he felt that although he was enjoying being home, he needed to get back to join his unit. He was a dedicated soldier and an amazing person. He was remembered by his fellow soldiers as someone that brought humor to the unit but serious when on duty. They all remember his ability to bring a laugh to someone feeling down. He is missed by us all.
Banner sponsored by Maria Lane

Gerald Laurendine: In 1970, at age 20, Gerald "Jerry" Laurendine received an Army draft notice. Wanting to take advantage of an opportunity to further his education as an electrician, Jerry enlisted for a three-year term. Leaving his young fiancé, Marilyn, in her hometown in the New Orleans area, Jerry reported for basic training on June 7, 1970 at Ft. Polk, Louisiana. After basic, Jerry went to school at Fort Monmouth, New Jersey, while his fiance' stayed home and planned their wedding for the day after Christmas. The couple spent their first married year together in New Jersey, a world away from their Southern Louisiana homes. In January 1972, their first daughter was born. Jerry and Marilyn enjoyed 9 weeks together with their newborn before Jerry left for Vietnam and his job with the Signal Corps. In January 1973, the family was stationed in Ft. Huachuca, Arizona while Jerry finished up his time with the Army.

Returning to the New Orleans area, Jerry continued his professional life as an electrician working at a power plant in Southern Louisiana. A second daughter was born to the happy couple. Five years later, Jerry accepted a position at Wolf Creek nuclear power plant and moved the family to Emporia. Since that time, two sons-in law, four grandsons, and two granddaughters have been added to the family. The Laurendines still have family members remaining in the New Orleans area, and enjoy regular trips to visit and stay in touch. Though New Orleans remains a special place in their hearts, Marilyn and Jerry have adopted a rural lifestyle, building a house in rural Lyon County in 2004. Jerry retired from his years at Wolf Creek . He and Marilyn enjoy working outside, home improvements, active participation with their church family, spending time with family, camping, and fishing. Banner sponsored by Mickey Edwards and Family

Don Law: Army SP 5. 7 Years of Service 1955-1962

John Linden: John was born July 29, 1948 in Hamilton, KS. He graduated from Hamilton High School in 1966. He joined the US Army in February of 1968. His basic training was in Fort Polk, LA and AIT at Fort Eustis, VA. He then joined the C Troop 1st of the 9thCalvary to become a helicopter mechanic. After AIT School he was sent to Vietnam. He served at Phu Bai before conveying to the Red Beach and sailed the coast to Saigon and then to the outskirts of Bearcat Base. He then volunteered to go to Phu Fin to finish out his service. While in Vietnam he was a mechanic for various helicopters such as Cobras, Loacher Scout Birds, and Slicks. He was also involved in the recovery of downed helicopters. He returned home on December 7, 1969. Banner Sponsored by Jay & Jamie Nordmeyer, Jeramia Linden, Doug & Jenny Rayburn, and Jeff & Angie DeLaTorre.

Alvin Logue: Coxswain WWII 1944-1946. Banner sponsored by Sherry Smiley and Family.

Ambrose Lopez: Marine Corporal,3rd Marine Division 1944-1946.Banner sponsored by John and Mike Lopez

Nathaniel Louis Lowery, Sr.: Entered the service Feb 28th, 1944 and was discharged Nov. 27th, 1945 . He was deployed to Central Europe Sept 11th,1944 and returned stateside Nov.10th, 1945 serving as a tank commander during battles at Ardennes and Rhineland at the rank of Tec 4 . He was awarded the AEME Campaign Medal w/3 Bronze Stars , the Good Conduct Medal and the World War II Victory Medal. Banner sponsored by Frank and Barb Lowery.

Robert Lowry: Robert Lowry more widely known as "Ob" was an Emporia native from a family consisting of six boys and five girls. All six of the brothers were in the Navy and four of the six brothers served in World War II. The six boys who served in the Navy are listed from oldest to youngest: Edwin James Lowry (WWII), Thomas Clifton Lowry (WWII), Robert Ova Lowry (WWII), Albert Lee Lowry (WWII), Jack Leroy Lowry, and Richard Dean Lowry. After Ob returned from World War II, he met and married Marian Smith from Miller, Kansas. They had a long, happy marriage and were blessed with four children, Christine, Margie, Julie, and Tom. They stayed in the Emporia area and raised their children in the Emporia and Americus communities. Banner sponsored by Tom Lowry

Jeffrey Luna: Jeff was born at Newman Hospital and started kindergarten at Kansas Avenue Elementary School, he continued all through the Emporia school system graduating from Emporia High School in 1981. He joined the Navy in 1987 and completed boot camp at the Great Lakes Naval Station. At age 24 he was considered “the old man” in his unit however he was awarded “Outstanding Member of his Unit” (Recruits were divided into 5 units). In September of 1987 he married his high school sweetheart, Kim Slaymaker, of Olpe. Throughout the remainder of his enlistment he was based state side at the Naval Base in Millington, Tennessee although he did have a short assignment in Okinawa. He was an aviation electrician. After serving 5 years in the Navy he and his family returned to Lyon County in 1994. He soon was able to find employment with Santa Fe Railroad with the Kansas City Division and worked out of Topeka, then Newton and is currently a supervisor of track maintenance for BNSF out of Galesburg, Illinois. Banner sponsored by Kim Luna

Raymond Luna: Raymond was born in Plymouth, Kansas and lived in that vicinity until he joined the Navy in November 1953 after graduating from Toledo Township High School in Saffordville, Kansas. He attended boot camp in San Diego, California. His service, 1953-1957, was during the “Cold War” era. Raymond was accepted into the Submarine School at Groton, Connecticut and after completion of the school, he was assigned to the USS Ronquil #396 a diesel boat where he spent the next 3 years of his enlistment. Among some of the places his boat docked during his service were Australia, Japan, and Hawaii. Medals he received were Good Conduct, China Service, and Defense. His rank at discharge was 2nd Class Engineman. He has been a resident of Lyon County, Kansas almost his entire life. Banner sponsored by Kim Luna

Lloyd V Luthi: Lloyd was born on January 16, 1928 in the family home in rural Lamont, Kansas. He was the second generation American from Swiss immigrants who settled southwest of Gridley, Kansas. Fred and Laura (Ott) Luthi were his parents. He was raised on the John D. Ott family farm where his mother grew up, southeast of Lamont. His playmates were his sister Ilva, and brothers Glenn and Raymond. Younger twin brothers died at birth.

He attended school at Lamont and graduated in the class of 1946. Lloyd completed a two year agriculture program at Kansas State University. He proudly served his country in the Army during the Korean conflict. His duties included serving as a food inspector hence he long held a dislike for celery, which easily spoiled in a train car. All of his family and friends knew that his favorite side of the Golden Gate bridge was the west side, which he got to see when he came back home from his time abroad. He was a true Kansan , spending all but the two years in the Army in Greenwood county, Kansas.

On September 30, 1952 he was united in marriage to Joann Wittmer in Bern Kansas. To this union was born four children, Jannette, Jill, Jay (Jane) Luthi, and Jeri (Tom) Knobloch. He was especially proud of his grandchildren Andrea (Tom) Koch, Aaron (Maria), Marie, Michael (Julie), Hannah, Yolanie and Judy Luthi, Jacob (Krystal), Ester, Nathan, Corban and Matthew Knobloch, and two great grandchildren, Kaih and Leora Luthi. Lloyd was a member of a large extended family both on the Luthi and Ott sides that included may cousins, nieces and nephews which he enjoyed.

Lloyd was a member of the Lamont-Gridley Apostolic Christian Church. He was a farmer, rancher and dairyman. During his life time he was active in 4_H as a member, parent, leader and grandparent.

Rob Roy MacGregor: Rob Roy MacGregor enlisted on July 24th, 1943. He completed basic training at Camp Fanin, Texas, and based on test scores, was selected to attend college through the Army Specialized Training Program. He reported to North Georgia College where he took physics, chemistry, math and other college courses. Four months after his arrival, the program was discontinued and the student-soldiers were sent to combat units in anticipation of the invasion of Normandy.

Private MacGregor was transferred to the 10th Armored Division, but was shortly thereafter transferred again to a combat engineering battalion. He was transferred one more time, to the 243rd Combat Engineering Battalion, which was preparing for deployment overseas. The 243rd sailed to Europe on the ATS Brazil, landing in Swansea, Whales on November 2nd, 1944. The battalion received additional training in England before crossing the channel to Rouen, France, where they landed on December 23rd, 1944. The battalion joined Patton's 3rd Army, engaged in the famous Battle of the Bulge.

As part of Company "C" of the 243rd, Rob moved to Rossignol, Belgium in late December. The company set up a roadblock and Rob's assignment was the anti-tank grenadier position in his squad. From there, Company "C" moved to Neuvillers, Andler, St Vith, Schonberg, and St Goarshausen, Germany. Along the way, they constructed corduroy and pontoon bridges, and cleared roads of mines and roadblocks. In some cases, they were under direct attack by the Germans while competing their missions. Rob and the 243rd remained in Germany after the war was over to construct POW camps and intern German POWs. He returned to the United States in March 1946 and was discharged from active service as a Technician 4th Grade at Camp Atterbury, IN. He entered the reserves as a corporal, but left the service in late 1949. Banner sponsored by Robyn MacGregor and Family.

Robyn K. MacGregor: Lieutenant Commander MacGregor enlisted in the US Coast Guard and began basic training at Cape May, New Jersey on June 17th, 1979. During her first enlistment she was stationed at the Reserve Training Center, Yorktown, Virginia and then transferred to USCGC CAPE GULL (WPB-95304) out of Miami, Florida. As a crewmember aboard USCGC CAPE GULL, she participated in law enforcement, drug interdiction, illegal migrant interdiction, and search and rescue operations. While in Miami, she was promoted to 2nd Class Petty Officer.

Over the next 6 years, Petty Officer MacGregor served in a port security unit out of Washington, D.C., USCGC SHEARWATER (WSES-3) out of Key West, Florida, and the Coast Guard Pay and Personnel unit in Topeka, Kansas. While a member of USCGC SHEARWATER, she qualified as a Quartermaster of the Watch and Underway Office of the Deck. While stationed at the Pay and Personnel Center, she was temporarily attached to the Marine Safety Office in Anchorage, Alaska in support of the EXXON VALDEZ oil spill response.

In 1989, Petty Officer MacGregor was selected to attend the Coast Guard's Officer Candidate School in Yorktown, Virginia. As part of the training, officer candidates sailed from Yorktown, Virginia to New Orleans aboard the USCGC EAGLE. Officer Candidate MacGregor was selected to direct the movement of the ship into Tampa under the supervision of the Officer of the Deck.

Upon completion of Officer Candidate School in March 1990, Ensign MacGregor was assigned to the Marine Safety Office/Group Los Angeles-Long Beach in Long Beach, California. During this tour, she served in the Port Operations, Marine Inspections, Marine Investigations and Group Operations Departments. She also was assigned temporarily to the Coast Guard Detachment in Bahrain during the first Gulf War.

Lieutenant Junior Grade MacGregor was transferred to Marine Safety Office Corpus Christi in 1994, where she served as Assistant, Port Operations and then Assistant, Marine Inspections and Investigations. She also served as the Port Operations liaison aboard USCGC GALLATIN (WHEC-714) during a 5 month military exchange cruise to northern and eastern Europe and the Mediterranean. While stationed at Corpus Christi, she was promoted to Lieutenant.

Lieutenant MacGregor was transferred to US Coast Guard Headquarters in 1998, where she served in the Port Security Directorate. She retired from active service as a Lieutenant Commander on July 17, 2002.

John Madrigal Sr: Served in the United States Army during WWII. He served in the European Theater of action (France and Germany). He was wounded in action and was awarded the Purple Heart Medal. Banner sponsored by Margaret Quirarte.

Lamar Markowitz: Lamar enlisted in the U.S. Navy on March 3, 1943. He finished high school and began his basic training at the Naval Training School in Richmond, Virginia under the V-12 training program. He was assigned to the Amphibious Forces, Pacific Fleet and ordered to Hawaii arriving on July 31,1945. He served as a Motor Machinist's Mate, 2nd Class, V-6 on the ship US Sphinx and participated in the occupation of Northern Honshu (Ominato Guard District), Japan from September 14, 1945 to November 21,1945 and then at Tokyo, Japan from November 23, 1945 to December 3, 1945. He was honorably discharged on May 25, 1946. he received the WWII Victory Medal. Banner sponsored by: Jan Darting and Family.

Leo Markowitz: Leo was born February 4, 1895 and entered the Naval Reserve on June 18, 1918. He was inducted at Kansas City, Missouri and then trained at Great Lakes, Illinois. He shipped out on Leviathan, which was the largest ship in the Navy at that time, on December 1,1918 for Eastleigh, England. The Leviathan was a troop transport ship that carried over 120,000 servicemen to and from Europe during WWI. He served overseas from July 20, 1918 to December 16, 1918 and was honorably deischarged on March 25, 1919. Banner sponsored by Sylvia Koepke and Family.

Dean Marsh: Army Private, WWII, January 6, 1943 to November 30, 1945. 32nd Medical Depot Company with 3rd Army under General Patton. Served throughout the European Theatre in 5 major battles: Normandy, Northern France, Rhineland, Ardennes, and Central Europe. Dean drove heavy trucks in the Medical Corp supplying medical supplies to all the front lines. He helped take US prisoners out of German concentration camps to field and EVAC hospitals. Banner sponsored by Imogene Marsh

Hilario J. Martinez: Petty Officer 3rd Class

Harold "Keith" Mayes: Radio Man 3rd class 1945-1949

Don W McAlister: Radio Operator Korea. Banner sponsored by Carolyn Davis and Family

Dr. Fred McCabe: I was born here in Emporia at St. Mary's hospital, but spent most of my youth in Topeka. In 1944 I was drafted and selected to the US Navy. I had intended on the Air Corp, but my eyes didn't make the grade. I am happy as I really enjoyed the Navy. I was placed on special assignment until my group was assigned. Temporarily I was sent to Treasure Island in San Francisco, and then to the Naval Ship yard at Hunter's Point (San Francisco) until we were assigned to a school. However it was near the end of the war and I spent my remaining service at Hunter's Point until discharge in May of 1945. While at Hunter's point, I served in the personnel office in charge of record and personnel assignments. I really enjoyed the navy and my assignments, particularly my assignment as leave yeoman at the naval base. I was able to board many naval vessels including the USS Missouri, and the aircraft carrier Intrepid. Since it was a submarine base, I was able to become familiar with many well known subs, but never serve on one, nor did I care to. Upon discharge I went directly to college, graduating from ESU with a BS in Science with medical emphasis. Them I went to Dental School in St. Louis, graduating in 1954 and set up practice in Emporia. Initially my office was over the present Graves Drug Store, before moving to my 12th Avenue location. I retired in December 2010 after more than 50 years and am sorry I couldn't practice many more years. I am happily married to Ginny. We have no children together, but she has a son and I have 6 children by a previous marriage. Banner sponsored by Virginia McCabe

Doug McGaw: Captain 1968-1972, Vietnam.

George W McGinns: Born March 13, 1923 in Topeka, Ks. He attended catholic high school in Topeka and later started a 50 year career with the Santa Fe Railroad. He joined the Army Air Corp in 1942 serving for 3 years as a gunner and telegraph operator in the Pacific Theater, He married Norma Goff in 1945 and raised their four daughters. Santa Fe Railroad brought him and his family to Emporia, KS in 1962, where they enjoyed many years before returning to Topeka with a job transfer.. He retired from the railroad in 1981 and lived in Topeka until his death in November, 2004. Banner sponsored by his daughters, Sue Godby, Georgianna Wong, Krista Ryan, and Loretta Roberts.

Clifford McMillan: Clifford McMillan was drafted by the United States Army at the ripe age of 19 while attending William Penn University in Oskaloosa, Iowa. He was drafted in 1966 and served as a private with a monthly check of only $72. Clifford made his way to flight school and was extremely successful. His knowledge and courage was truly one-of-a-kind as he proved how talented he was flying at the top of his class. Private McMillan soon became Officer McMillan.

Officer McMillan has flown helicopters in nearly every corner of the earth. He first began in Vietnam where during a practice flight at 0200 a shot from the ground demolished the tail rotor and sent the helicopter and its team spinning to the ground. Officer McMillan took control of the helicopter and did his best to guide his team to the ground. He successfully landed the chopper, making Officer McMillan and his team the first to have ever survived a helicopter crash due to a destroyed tail rotor gear box. When they landed the team was amongst a field full of land mines. Fortunately, not one of them had been set off. After being rescued and returning to the field for post-observation, the team discovered that the helicopter which Officer McMillan had guided actually landed on top of two land mines which luckily did not detonate.

Clifford served in the U.S. Army from 1966-1992, a total of 26 years. He achieved the rank of Chief Warrant Officer (CW-4) prior to his retirement in 1992. Chief McMillan has flown many of the Army's aircrafts such as: Cobra, OH-6, Huey, Kiowa, 737, and Bird Dogs. He has also had the opportunity to fly some many prominent figures: President Richard Nixon, Kansas Senator Bob Dole, and U.S. Army General, Norman Schwarzkopf . Banner sponsored by Joan Maguire

James E Melton: My Dad and Mother graduated from Emporia High in 1946. My Dad married Lucille(Babe) Lodle on November 29, 1949. Dad worked part time on the Santa Fe and hired out full time as a switch man in 1947. He was drafted into the Army in January 1952. His first stop was Camp Crowder. He was then sent to Camp Roberts in Paso Robles, California. My Mom moved out there to live near him. He went through wire school. He was sent to Seoul Korea in June of 1952. He was in the 45th Artillery Division and the 712th Railroad Battalion. He worked along side Korean soldiers on the Korean Railroad. He was sent back to the states in March of 1953 as a Corporal. He chose to join the reserves for 8 years rather than go to a base in the states. He came back to Emporia to go back to his job. He was discharged 8 years later. He returned to Korea with my Mom as part of the Korea Revisit Program. The Korean Government paid for veterans to return all expenses paid to thank them for their service to their country. He went to a small village to look for a guy he worked with not knowing if the guy would even remember him 30 years later. A little old Korean man came to the door and with a smile on his face said Corporal Jimmy. My Dad was very happy to be remembered and with the help of the man's son-in-law exchanged letters and railroad calendars and then no more letters came. My Dad returned again in 1999 and got to see the country transformed into a very modern city. He took an Honor Flight in 2011. He got to go on a two day flight so he got to see a lot more of DC. He said it was a trip he was so happy he got to go on. He was one of the first Korean Vets to be asked to go.

He retired from the Burlington Northern Santa Fe in December of 1988. He had 44 years of service including his part time work on the railroad while he was still in high school. Lucille((Babe) died in March 1990. He spent his retirement drinking coffee with friends and traveling. His favorite place to go was Pismo Beach California. I looked for good flight deals for him and he traveled a lot but always wanted a beach to walk on. We

Joe Moreland: Joe graduated from El Dorado high school in 1942 and with the permission of his parents joined the army. Little did they know he was planning on transferring to the U.S. Army Air Corps. With his excellent math skills, he became a navigator instead of a pilot. During WW II he flew on a B-17 with the 8th Air Force in England and flew 25 missions over Germany. Recalled to active duty in February of 1951 during the Korean War he joined the crew of a B-29, stationed in Japan, as a navigator. They flew missions all over Korea and on July 3rd, 1952 were shot down over North Korea. Joe was a POW for 14 months, first in camps in North Korea and later in Mukdun, China. He and the crew that survived were released on Labor Day 1953. During his service he received two Purple Hearts, the Air Medal, the Silver Star and the Distinguished Flying Cross. He retired as a Major from the Air Force Reserve in 1968. He spent his professional life as a petroleum geologist in Kansas and married his high school sweet heart Virginia Coffman Moreland in August of 1943. The banner is sponsored by his daughter, Angie, son-in-law, Mark, and their children Ben and Gretchen Schreiber.

Calvin Gale Morgan: Calvin was born in 1923 in northern Morris County on a farm west of Dwight, Kansas. While serving in WWII he was stationed at the naval base on the island of Bermuda in the Atlantic Ocean. He worked on the 30mm guns on the naval airplanes. Calvin had 2 brothers that also served during WWII. Kenneth Morgan in the Navy on the U.S.S. Keokok and half brother Wayne Olson, US Army. A third brother, Keith Morgan, served in the National Guards. Banner sponsored by Jeffrey Morgan and Family.

John R Mounkes Jr.: Air Force, SRA Desert Storm Shield

John R Mounkes Sr.: Sergeant Major. More than 21 years of service.

Mark Murphy: Air Force Major, 1998 to Present. Banner sponsored by Charman Murphy

Scott Austin Mouse: Scott entered into active service March 18, 1944. His duty included being a navigator-bombardier serving overseas with the 11th Bomb Squadron and with the 490th Bomb Squadron in China in the Asiatic-Pacific Theater of Operations and in Germany in the European Theater of Operations. He navigated a B-25 airplane over land and sea by dead reckoning, piloting, and celestial and radio navigation. He used such instruments as drift meter, pelorus, sextant, radio compass, radar, and periodic compass. Scott plotted position on map, altered courses, maintained and completed navigation logs. He had to have knowledge of meteorology while locating, identifying, and accurately bombing assigned targets. All equipment had to be inspected and tested prior to each mission. All bombsights had to be adjusted for ground speed, altitude, and drift of airplane. Scott flew 8 combat missions in the Asiatic-Pacific Theater of Operations and has approximately 700 flying hours. He also instructed Aviation Cadets and Bombardiers in aerial navigation for four months. While serving as an Aircraft Engineering Officer he served overseas with the 42nd Air Depot at Ansback. He inspected all the engineering records and handled all correspondence. He supervised office personnel, checked all records and forms relative to aircraft engineering, and supervised the preparation of daily aircraft and maintenance reports. While serving Scott received Asiatic-Pacific Theater Ribbon with 3 Bronze Service Stars, European Theater Ribbon, American Theater Ribbon, WWII Victory Medal and the Chinese Star. Banner sponsored by Melinda Whetzel and Family.

Nadine Canfield Nagle: Nadine was accustomed to teaching in a classroom more than flying in the cockpit of a warplane. She signed on to become one of a select few in the Women Airforce Service Pilots, or WASPs, in the midst of World War II. Her life changed Jan. 3, 1943 when her husband, Dale Canfield, was killed in a bomber crash in England on a mission to bomb German submarine pens in France. "At his death, that just kind of ruined my life," Nagle, 95, said. "I didn't know what to do." She read a magazine article about Jackie Cochran, who formed a group of women pilots who ferried warplanes across the country to help the war effort.
Nagle, who grew up on a crop farm and was a school teacher in her native Kansas, wanted in.
"I thought if Dale isn't here to fly, I will fly in his place," she said. She traveled to Wichita to earn a pilot's license. Later, in April 1944, she trekked to Avenger Field in Sweetwater, Texas to begin seven months of learning how to fly "the Army way."

Nadine Nagle was a pilot in the Women Airforce Service Pilots organization during World War II. "It was exactly the same training that the male cadets were getting" prior to deploying, she said. The WASPs were considered civil service aviators, she said, and weren't officially accepted into the Army Air Corps, the forerunner of the Air Force. Most of the WASPs-in-the-making had jobs far apart from the world of 1940s aviation. They were factory workers, teachers, nurses, businesswomen, a pro-golfer and even a Broadway dancer, she remembered. "It was wonderful to get there and meet all these other kinds of women," she said. The hardest part of her training was learning to fly at night, she said. "I was so afraid I wasn't going to pass then I cried and my pillow was wet with tears," she said. Of the 105 women who started in her class, 55 graduated. And so did she. "The ladies were washed out because they could not fly the Army way," Nagle said. She ferried passengers and planes, such as the troop carrying C-47 Skytrain and the B-24 Liberator bomber.

When D-Day arrived, Nagle "knew that things were going to be coming to a close" on the warfront. Before the war ended, the WASPs would be out of the cockpit. Congress disbanded the women's aviators group in December 1944 – despite Cochran's attempt to make the WASPs a full-fledged part of the military. Of the more than 1,000 women who became WASP pilots, 38 died flying in uniform. Since they were not part of the military, the female aviators were not recognized as veterans and did not get any death benefits, Nagle remembered.
"We were civil service, and it was sad that we were not remembered," she recalled. "… In the beginning, they did not recognize us for anything, even flags on our coffins."

When she left the WASPs, she continued to serve in the American Red Cross. "I did not want to get out of uniform," she said. But she never returned to the cockpit. "My goal in life was married, family and teacher, so that's what I did," she said. In 1947, she married Frank Nagle, an Air Force officer, and the couple had four children. Nagle's career brought them to the Miami Valley when he was stationed at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base. She retired in 1982 as a kindergarten teacher. She's acted as a mentor to young women with aspirations in aviation for decades. A granddaughter graduated from the Air Force Academy and became an aviation maintenance officer. In 1977, President Jimmy Carter signed a bill that recognized the WASPs as World War II veterans. In 2010, the Women Airforce Service Pilots received the Congressional Gold Medal in a ceremony at the Capitol in Washington, D.C. Nagle joined her fellow WASPs there. "It was a wonderful life and the WASPs taught me one thing: that I would be able to do anything that I wanted to do," she said.

John Nordmeyer: was born November 9, 1929 in Laramie, WY. He was raised in rural Toronto, KS. He graduated from Toronto High School in 1947. John was drafted into the US Marine Corp in 1952. His basic training was at Camp Pendleton, San Diego, CA. While at basic training he received a Sharp Shooter Award on the M1 & 45. He then joined the 3rd Tank Battalion and was transferred to Hawaii for further tank training. While in Hawaii he received orders to be transferred to Korea for the Korean War. While on the way to Korea the Peace Treaty was signed. Therefore, they rerouted to Yokohama, Japan for 5 months of training with new tanks. He then came back to Treasure Island, San Francisco, CA. He transferred to the 9th Marine Corp Reserves as a Corporal on March 12, 1954 and returned home. Banner Sponsored by Jay & Jamie Nordmeyer and Nancy Nordmeyer.

John L. Nymeyer: John Nymeyer was better known by his middle name, Lawrence. He grew up on a farm near Loving, NM; and he began flying in his mid teens. He completed the Civilian Pilot Training program which had been set up to provide a larger group of screened candidates for military flight training. He was accepted into the Army Air Force Aviation Cadet program at Randolph Army Air Base in San Antonio, training at multiple bases and ending up in B-17 bomber training at "Rattle Snake" Airbase near Pyote, TX (only about 90 miles from where he grew up). Interestingly his entire Bomb Group (381st), including all levels of rank and skills lived and trained there together, left as unit aboard a train and picked up mostly new B-17's, trained in them for a relatively short time and then flew them individually (and nonstop) to England by way of the northern route near New Foundland, Greenland, Iceland, and landfall at Scotland, ultimately landing at the Bomb Group's new home, Ridgewell airfield in Essex, England. The crews tended to stay together for their combat tour, which at that time was 25 combat missions. They had flown 23 missions and on May 24, 1944 were shot down by fighters just after completing a bomb run over Berlin on their 24th mission. Lawrence said they were not in their own airplane, a B-17G, on this mission because their Group commander was tasked with leading whole mission (multiple bomb groups) and needed the better performing aircraft. Lawrence and the rest of the crew ended up in an older B-17F. He said they had passed through very heavy flak over the target and then were hit by fighters, which set a wing on fire. He said the SOP was that if the flames from wing were longer than the tail it was time to get out because the plane was either going to explode or the wing would break and fold. Five of the ten man crew got out. Lawrence said they were out in about two minutes and as he was falling he rolled back to look up and saw the airplane explode.
Because a bullet had passed through his parachute pack, when he opened it the canopy was damaged and resulted in less control and higher rate of descent. He was knocked out on landing and awoke to find a German civilian holding a gun to his forehead, and in perfect English, telling him to stand up and look around. He said fortunately a German army patrol arrived and took him and two other crew members to a collection and interrogation facility where they were kept for ten days. Then they were sent by train (box car) to Stalag Luft 3, near Sagan in eastern Germany. Their living conditions were "sparse," but their diet was very sparse, consisting mostly of German potatoes, bread, barley or pea soup, coffee; and if Red Cross parcels could get through, small supplements of spam, cheese, cereal and tea. (Including Red Cross parcels they calculated they were probably living on 1200 calories per day.) They also were able to send and receive mail occasionally. On Jan. 30th, 1945 the were given notice to be ready to move in one hour. They (and their guards) ended up moving out at midnight and marching thirty kilometers (18.5 miles) in the snow. The Russians were advancing from the east and were getting close. They marched in the snow several days, spending the nights in factories or barns until they were put into small railroad boxcars & moved to Nuremberg. (He wrote about seeing the Russian fighter planes flying in heavy snow storms and wondered how they kept from running into each other. Later on as they moved south and west they saw American fighters frequently and were concerned how difficult it was for the pilots to sort out who the large groups of men were.) They left Nuremberg headed toward Moosberg, kept organized and together, but essentially on their own and waiting for Patton's forces… which showed up in their camp on April 29, 1945. (after a huge artillery exchange overhead the night before and much gunfire and tanks every where when they came through) After that there were a few days to wait for C-47's to take them out of Germany and back to England. (After 24 combat missions and almost a year as POW he was on his way home.) Banner sponsored by David Nymeyer and Family

Frederick W. Obee: Fred entered the army in the fall of 1941. He joined the 39th regiment of the Ninth infantry Division. His combat experience was Sicily and The Normandy Landing on Utah Beach and the entire European Theater Operation. Discharged November 1945.

Hugh W. Obee: Hugh entered the army in the fall of 1944. He joined the Americal Division on Leyte in the Philippine Islands. He was an active gun operator. He was killed in action in March of 1945 before his 21st birthday.

Roy Obee: Gene Obee enlisted in the army in November 1943. After basic training in Georgia, he was shipped out in October 1944 to the Ardennes Forest in Belgium. On December 16th they were hit by artillery fire which was the start of the Battle of the Bulge. He was captured December 18th. They began the long march through the winter in the bitter cold with no overshoes, overcoats or helmets. During this march his foot froze.

They were put on passenger trains to cross the Rhine River and they then marched through the day and were locked in barns at night. Midway through the forced march they were put in boxcars for 5 days & nights with a 30 minute break every 24 hours. Their rations were a bowl of turnip soup and a small amount of bread. Some days nothing at all. The prisoners worked to repair railroads at night. Obee became ill from eating a turnip skin from a trash can and was put in a hospital run by captured allied Drs. and medics. He was then put into a work camp with better conditions.

The German guard at this camp treated them as well as he could. As spring came they could hear American vehicles. The guard did not want to be captured so he left the prisoners and disappeared one night. The prisoners then wandered the town they were in not knowing where they were. They had old clothes, were unshaven, no showers for 4 months so the Americans didn't know who they were. After a few minutes of talking they were liberated on April 15, 1945. After returning home Gene married, raised 2 children and was a truck driver for many years.
He still lives in Burns, Kansas. Banner sponsored by Cheryl Smith

Cornelius J. O'Connor: Cornelius enlisted August 15,1942. His entry into service was Leavenworth, KS. He was honorably discharged October 20,1945. His campaign was Air Offensive Europe GO 33 WD 45. Cornelius was decorated with the Distinguished Flying Cross, European-African-Middle Eastern Service Medal with 1 Bronze Star, and Air Medal with 3 oak leaf clusters. He was Machine Gunner on a B17 and made 25 missions over Europe. He was a Gunnery instructor, taught 50 Caliber flexible gunnery, Sperry ball turret, sighting on a B-29, and airplane mechanic gunner. Cornelius passed away September 24, 2004. Banner sponsored by his wife Doris, children Mary White, Kathleen Clay, John O'Connor, Neie O'Conner, Jerry O'Connor, and Mike O'Connor.

Kenneth Ogle: Air Force Sergeant, 1967-1971. Banner sponsored by Kevin Ogle and Family.

Walter Orr: In 1941 Walter was just 16 years old and in 10th grade. He wanted to help his family by joining the army. In 1943 he was inducted at Camp Grant in Illinois. In February 1945 his unit was sent to France. While there he received the Combat Infantry Badge and the Distinguished Unit Citation.

He didn't speak much about his time in the service, but he did tell us two stories. One day his unit came upon a German motorcycle in the road. While the rider was in the woods, Walter took the bike for a spin! When he was asked by his children if he STOLE the bike, his response (to make sure they didn't go through life thinking their father was a thief) was "No, I took it before he could lose it!" Another story took place at the end of the war. When Hitler surrendered, Walter himself took the first message and delivered it to his CO. His unit then delivered the news to a French village, "liberating" them.

After his time in the Army, Walter worked for Motorola and American Safety for many years, and was instrumental in developing seatbelt restraint technology. He could fix anything, was a devout St. Louis Cardinals fan, a woodworker extraordinaire, and the best father and grandpa around. Banner sponsored by Gretchen Russell

Tony Ortega: Marines, Sergeant, Vietnam War, 1965-1967

Maurice Criss Patterson: Maurice enlisted into the U.S. Army on May 21, 1942. He was sent to Camp Shelby, Mississippi and was trained as a machine gunner. In May, 1943, he was sent to officers training school at Camp Wood, Texas, earning the rank of first lieutenant. At Camp Wood he taught a battle conditioning course. In 1945, Patterson was sent overseas on the USS General M.L. Hersey to Leyte, Philippines where he was in charge of unloading ships. Later he was sent to Zamboanga, Philippines. Patterson returned to the United States on the USS Republic at the end of World War II. He spent about 6 months at Fitzsimons Army Hospital rehabilitating from knee injuries before leaving the army in 1946. Banner sponsored by Vicki Potter and Family.

John C Patton DDS: John join the United States Army after graduating from dental school in 1941. He was honorably discharged in 1945. He was involved in the Pacific Theater . He retired from the Army Reserves as a colonel in 1975. Banter is sponsored by Ruby Butcher, Judy Patton, and Dr.John C. Patton, DDS.

Michael Patton: Michael grew up in Walton, KS and was the youngest of four children. Michael enlisted in the United States Marine Corp in 1965. During his time in the Marine Corp, he served in Vietnam and earned a Purple Heart for his service. After his military service, Michael completed his Bachelor's Degree at Emporia State University and attended law school at the University of Kansas, earning his Juris Doctorate in 1973. Michael then moved back to Emporia to practice law and raise his family. He was elected as the Lyon County Attorney in 1976 and served in that capacity through 1978. Since then, he has been engaged in private practice.

Michael resides in Emporia with his wife, Kathy, and has two sons, Tony and Ryan, and three grandchildren. Both Tony and Ryan are also attorneys who practice in the Kansas City area. Michael has been active in the community throughout his career, serving as the Lyon County Republican Committee Chairman for several years, a past president of the Emporia Country Club, and as a Trustee for Emporia State University. Banner sponsored by Larry Putnam

Daniel J. Payton: 20 Years of Service, Danag AFB 1969-1970. Daniel was in aircraft maintenance during the Vietnam War. Banner sponsored by Steve Vaughn and Family.

Vernon Pennington: Sergeant Vernon Frank Pennington , the son of Hattie and Frank Pennington, was born June 23, 1917 at Burr Oak. He graduated from Emporia High School in 1939, and was always proud that he was a member of the 1939 EHS State Championship basketball team. He went on to graduate from Kansas State Teachers College with a degree in business and accounting. He married Virginia Lea Smith August 21, 1944 in Santa Barbara, CA. He served four years in WWII in the Marine Air Corps on Guadalcanal, New McBrides and Munda and a second tour of duty aboard the Aircraft carrier, "The Vella Gulf". After the war he and his wife Virginia, both from Emporia, returned to their home.

In 1947, Vernon , his father, and brother formed a partnership and bought an old building at 22 E 5th. They razed it and built a new building for the Pennington Auto Supply Co. They also handled oxygen and welding supplies from the National Cylinder and Gas Company. A few years later Vernon bought out his father and brother's interests and continued to operate the auto business until 1961 when he sold it. After selling the business, Vernon kept the Oxygen and welding business and sold oxygen to both hospitals. He built a building at 610 East St. for the oxygen supplies. He retired in 1976. He was a member of Ball McColm Post 5, American Legion; more than a 50 year member of Emporia Masonic Lodge 12; lifetime member of the First Christian Church; and a 49 year member of the Chamber of Commerce. He had 2 daughters, Cheryl Pennington, who lives in Allenspark, Co., and Jonda Burgess, who passed away in 2006. He is also survived by 2 grandchildren: Granddaughter Taryn Lea Burgess, of Denver Co. and Rustin Ryan Burgess, his wife, Jennifer and their 2 children, Liam and Neely, all of Thornton, Co. Vernon passed away in 1992 of Legionaries Disease and 2 days later his wife Virginia passed away of a cerebral hemorrhage. Banner and tribute sponsored by daughter Cheryl Pennington and life long friend Lindy Whetzel.

Francis Petitjean: ESU Alum, Brother and Uncle, Vietnam 1968 Banner sponsored by Amy Harmon

Frank Phillips: Army 1939-1945 Banner sponsored by Cheryl Knight

Robert Phillips: Robert joined the US Army in 1942, he was 22 years old. He became a member of the US Army Quartermaster Corp. He left England on June 16th ,1944 (D-Day plus 10) and arrived in France, his assignment was to drive a supply truck to the men on the front lines. He obtained the rank of Corporal while in the Army. After his discharge in 1945 he returned home to Larned, KS and married Juanita VanCleave and had two daughters, Anita and Charla. Robert would become a farmer on a property between Americus and Emporia. Banner sponsored by Charla Adams

Gary Poff: With over 20 years in the National Guard, Gary has been all over the world. He is a recipient of the Bronze Star for meritorious service in a combat zone, as well as an armload of medals and coins awarded for outstanding accomplishments. He developed assessments and programs for up to 23,000 detainees at Camp Bucca. He has spent 10 years in the US Air Force as part of the 552nd Aircraft Generation Squadron, 964th Aircraft Maintenance Unit. Tours of duty have included Russia, Japan, China, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, England, Ireland, Greenland, Panama, Italy, Hawaii, Iceland and Tahiti. He has been sent to the Middle East eight times. Banner sponsored by Shirley Poff

Tom Poston: Tom entered the Army January 9, 1964. His basic training took place at Fort Ord, CA. Advanced Infantry Training took place at Fort Riley, KS. Tom went to Vietnam with Company A, 2nd Battalion, 28th Infantry. Tom was a Specialist E4. Tom had three brothers that served in Vietnam at this time. Bill- Navy, Jim-Army Artillery and John– Army Combat Engineer. Returning from Vietnam, Tom spent six years with the United States Army Reserve as a Specialist E4. Tom received his Honorable Discharge December 31st, 1969. Banner sponsored by Janell Rodgers and Family.

Michael Prohodsky: Navy, LT. JG , 1942-1946

Santos Quirarte: Army, Colonel, 330th Infantry, 4 Bronze Stars, WWII, 1942-1945. Banner sponsored by Gene Quirarte and Family.

Ryan Rader: Army SPC Combat Engineer 1995-1999 Banner sponsored by Patti Lemon

Daniel Rahe: Navy, HM3, 3 Years of Service. Banner sponsored by Greg Rahe

Edward Rathke: Born in 1952, in the small town of Strong City, KS at the Stubenhofer Mid-Wife House, as Edward John Rathke. I had an early childhood of being loved and passed around among family members a lot due to my Mother {Irma Alruma Sophia (Vahsholtz) Rathke}, dying when I was just about 11 months old. My three older sisters and my Dad took care of me very well, but he and my sisters I am sure had their hands full.

When I was almost five, my dad (Edward William) re-married to a widow from Chase County by the name of Velma I. (Eason) Neinstedt. She was a good Step-Mother, making huge impressions on me immediately, especially with her great home cooking, which had mostly been missing up until that point of my life. I remember many family gatherings with her side of the family, but I felt we drifted away from my natural Mother's family, so I really didn't get to know a lot of that side of my family until I had returned from the Navy.

My Dad and step-mother gave me and my closest in age sister (Eileen), enough rope that we could have really hung ourselves, but fortunately we both picked good childhood friends to grow up with and stayed out of trouble. I remember early on the lessons of home and how working hard was the thing I was supposed to do. Being a young grade school student meant working in the garden, pulling weeds, plucking chickens, feeding the pigs and cows and keeping my mouth shut, (for the most part) and not complaining. As the years progressed my step-mother's influence upon me and my dad was apparent with her telling me to "stay away from college and find yourself a good trade such as welding". So when High school time came I enrolled in the welding program at the Tech School. Many of my close friends were also taking training in the various trades. It was a time that I enjoyed in my growing years. When it came time to graduate my step-mother pulled me aside one day when my father was not around and in no uncertain terms laid it out that I would be out of the house for good within a few months of graduation.

I had dreamed of being in the Navy many times growing up. Often when we were playing that is with John Fitzpatrick and I imagined we were. Sailors doing the Navy stuff. Later in High School I started working for a man whose son happened to be another of my best friends. We both worked for his dad, Arthur L. Hopkins, who helped influence our enlistment in the U.S. Navy. Art spent twenty years in the Marine Corp and had one tour of duty in Korea and two tours in Vietnam. He didn't tell us a lot of stories about his time there, but he didn't have to. We had nothing but respect for the man, so when his son Stephen Hopkins, and another friend of ours by the name of Dennis Coen, joined the Navy you could see he was proud of us. May 12th at the young age of 18, we three, who had signed our names on the dotted line, became the property of Uncle Sam. We were guaranteed to go through Boot Camp together, so a few months later we were in San Diego, California, learning all about the big world that surrounded us. At this point in the story I feel it is important to mention that there were several other Emporia area high school students who also joined the service around this same time, including my closest friend at the time, John Fitzpatrick. We had grown up only two houses apart from the fourth grade on. So just a couple months later he and another close friend Mike Dailey were in San Diego where a friendship was made with another Sailor by the name of Robert Baumer. Bob came for a visit forty years ago and likeD the town so much he never left.

These friends' enlistments were all taking place during Vietnam era and along with the following small list of names are other I can remember signed up or were drafted from our high school class or ones close to our class. I know I probably have missed several, but here are a few of the names. Mario Alonzo Navy, Lee Glaser Navy, John Aschbrenner Marine, Chuck Wiedner Marine, Mike Sirico Navy, Keith Peres Navy, Gary Rhoads Marine, Bill Jenks Army, Terry and Randy Rhoads Navy, Don Brown Army, Rich Jaggard Army, Jim DeMotte Navy, Steve Aust Army, Gary Hanson Army, Mike J. Langley Navy, Dave Tereriria Navy, Steve Corbin Navy, Robert Schmidt Air Force, Doug White Army, Cary Guiled Navy, Sam Humphreys Army, Rick Carlisle Marine, Dana Walker Army, Bruce White Army, Jim Wilson Army, and my wish would be to see each and every one of them have a banner and their name on the Wall of Honor at the Veterans Park.

So, after Steve, Dennis and I graduated "Boot Camp", we all went to our separate schools of training. I received "A" School orders to Treasure Island in San Francisco, for Firefighting/Damage Control School, along with Nuclear, Biological, and Chemical counter major's school. We learned a lot, such as fighting an oil fire in an enclosed space without any protective clothing or a breathing apparatus, the point of this training being to let you know how much black stuff you could breath and still survive, because once out to sea you couldn't run outside and let it burn. After my training there I received another set of "A" school orders sending me back to San Diego

for welding, sheet metal and carpentry school, after nine weeks additional training was completed, I thought I would be going to the fleet, but I had scored well on all my tests, so I was selected for another six weeks of specialized welding instruction. Upon successful completion I finally received orders to the fleet aboard the USS Durham LKA-114 which was just completing a dry dock period. I was assigned to R-Division which is what all my training had been preparing me for. In a few more weeks the ship was ready for another overseas deployment, we had a shakedown cruise to Acapulco Mexico, and in three more weeks we were underway for my first 10 month deployment. It was an exciting time for me, I was on a great ship and it was obvious by the crew's attitude and the way we trained and took care of the ship. We even won the best ship in the Pacific Fleet one year. I gained a greater sense of confidence, about my Navy Rate and started making Rank as well. We did a tremendous amount of sailing but there was time for several ports-of-call as well. The ship I was on had several MK Boats, "4ea. MK-8's and 5ea. MK-6's", even when we had to anchor out we always had several boats to use for a liberty launch. The full complement of ships-crew was 260, and we could also carry 350 Marines or Soldiers, "but we rarely worked with Army". Whichever the case we often carried a large portion of the Battalion equipment, including the tanks, trucks, jeeps, fuel and their food and supplies. During my four years of the "Regular Navy" service I learned so many thing about life, they ranged from skills I would use throughout my civilian carrier to life lesions about people and humanity. During my four years of my first enlistment I ended up making two 10 month deployments, and I was one of the lucky ones that was not married at the time. There was no R&R you couldn't fly home, no phones were on the ship, and you were normally out to sea 15 to 30 days at a time. One of the good things was that in few major ports, such as Hong Kong, there were call centers which Sailors from all the countries knew where they were. These would have 20 to 30 pay type phones so you could call home if you had the money.

The most significant memories cam from our Humanitarian Operations during the end of the Vietnam conflict. We were at Pohang, South Korea working with their ROK Marines making beach landings on very rocky shoals and beaches in the middle of the winter, it was the only time we ever had to shovel the weather decks of snow when doing our operations. It was at this time that the orders came to proceed at flank speed to the Da Nang, and/or Cam Ranh Bay area of Vietnam. The snow and bitter cold temperatures, quickly disappeared after two days of sailing as we neared the destination. The trip in route, also included long days and nights as we were getting our MK-Boats back in shape for runs into the rivers or beaches around Cam Ranh Bay. (The time on the Rocky beaches of Korea had been rough on our boats which we had to repair before the ships arrival in Vietnamese waters.)

I had been very busy welding on the boats during the trip and one night I kept hearing what seemed to be thunder in the distance, and as I raised my welding hood one time I saw that is was not thunder making the noise. What I saw was a very large Firefight going on along the coast, and turning to my Chief I asked, should I stop welding? He looked to me and stated "the Captain wants these boats ready to go and he will tell us when we should stop. Besides they aren't shooting at us yet". I went back to work, but I think it was the "yet" that stuck in my mind. We witnessed many more Firefights over the next few weeks and a lot of other interesting things. We landed and refueled many helicopters during this time including Marine, Nay, Air America (CIA), and even pushed a perfectly good South Vietnamese Huey Helicopter over the side. But the single biggest item that will always be with me, was the evacuation. This evacuation brought to our ship, long lines boats, which were full of frightened and desperate people and families. As these South Vietnamese nationals were allowed to come on board, we took from them all their guns, hand grenades, and knives, even their lighters. This put them totally at our mercy, which had to be even more frightening for them, and this put upon us the huge responsibility of protecting, feeding, and rendering medical assistance where needed, and caring for them over the next several days. On our ship alone we had over 5000 people that we saved from death and the hands of the North or at minimum many years in what were called Retraining Camps.

My time in the Regular Navy ended that September, with me returning to Emporia. I then went back to work for Art Hopkins for a while, and then on to HASTCO, and I taught welding in the evening at the Tech College for a while, and then went to the City of Emporia for employment. In the fall of 1981 I joined the Navy Reserves and spent almost seven years with the Topeka unit before resigning to give all my work effort to my job at the City. During my time in the Reserves we often flew out once a month to many military bases for various training, and there was of course our two weeks of active duty each year. Throughout this time I was primarily assigned to the USS Bagley FF-1069, (Reserve Force). During the 1980's while on one of our two week active duty sessions aboard the Bagley, we were assigned to supplement the regular crew and sail with the ship as far as Hawaii. This

allowed the Sailors in our unit to be part of the first Battle Ship Group deployment since their decommissioning in the late 1960's. We sailed with the Battle Group from San Diego to Pearl Harbor. (A side note, one of most impressive things I ever witnessed was watching a Battle Ship shoot its 16' guns). The most interesting part of that trip was the float group catching a Russian sub on our sonar. The Battle Group gave the Russian Sub no indication that we knew their location or that they were there, that is until the morning of the third day. That morning all the ships turned on the sonar pinging devices to full strength and pinged the subs exact location at the same instant. It was extremely loud on our ship, but being in the Sub and with eight of US Navy ships pinging your exact location must have been overwhelmingly loud and uncomfortable for them, and very fun for us. I also spent time aboard the USS Hepburn FF-1055 and the USS Lang FF-1060, where I earned the designation of Enlisted Warfare Specialist.

Thank you to the City of Emporia, and Emporia Main Street for Honoring the Military Veterans in such a public format.
Edward J. Rathke HT-1 (SW) U.S. Navy

Eugene Ray: Eugene L. Ray was born in Strawn, KS in 1922 and graduated from High School there. He enlisted in the Army Air Corps in October of 1942. He trained in California and was sent to the European Theater of Operations for 21 months. He served as Crew Chief of a P-38 maintenance crew until November of 1945. He was awarded the Bronze Star for military achievement, 6 campaign battle stars and the Presidential Unit Citation. He left the military as a Technical Sargeant. He married his high school sweetheart, Berta and raised 4 children (David, Debby, Ernie and Sheila). He worked on a bridge construction crew for a few years before moving to Emporia, buying a home and working for Fanestil Meat Packing Plant for 10 years. He then worked on the paint crew at Kansas State Teacher's College/Emporia State University until his death in 1980.

Charles Rayl: COL Rayl enlisted in the USAR in January 1964 and was commissioned in the US Army on March 1st,1965. IN 1970 he was commissioned in the Kansas National Guard and remained in the Guard until his retirement in 1994. COL Rayl completed Armor Officer Basic Course in 1965 as well as Airborne Training. He became an Army aviator in 1967 and was assigned to A Troop, 7th Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry in the Republic of Vietnam in 1968. He held various command postions in Armored Cavalry Regiments from November 1968 until May of 1970 in Germany. In September of 1970 he was commissioned in the KS National Guard serving in the 137th Aviation Company and the Headquarters of the State Area Command. KSARNG. During his time in the KSNG he also served as the Commander 920th Medical Detachment (Air Ambulance) and as the Battalion Commander of several units including the 135th Aviation Battalion, the 108th Aviation and the 365th Armor Battalion, and as the Brigade Commander of the Troop Command, KSARNG. He served on the Headquarters staff as the Director of Security and was the State Aviation Officer during his last assignment in the KSNG.

He is the recipient of the Purple Heart and the Legion of Merit along with numerous other military medals, ribbons, and badges. He was the Distinguished Military Graduate of the Kansas State University ROTC program. He has a Masters Degree in Agricultural Economics from Kansas State and Juris Doctorate (Law) Degree from Washburn University and is the President and Attorney at Law for Rayl and Jones, LLC, of Cottonwood Falls, KS. He has received numerous honors and awards from Kansas State University, and from Iowa State University. He received the Kansas Preservation Alliance Award for Excellence in Preservation Advocacy in 2003. He considers his most personal special achievement in getting the of SGT Henry Jackson, A Troop, 7th Squadron, 17th Air Cavalry added to the Vietnam Wall on Memorial Day 1999. Banner sponsored by Sharon Rowland

Joe Reed: Lyon County native and current Emporian, Joe Reed served 2 active duty enlistment terms in the United States Air Force from 1991-1998, completing his tenure as a Staff Sergeant (SSgt). Following basic training at Lackland AFB, TX and technical training at Keesler AFB, MS, Reed was assigned to the 450 Intelligence Squadron, 6950 Electronics Security Group, Royal Air Force Base Chicksands, United Kingdom. From there, he was assigned to the 54th Combat Communication Squadron, 5th Combat Communication Group, Robins Air Force Base, GA.

During Reed's active duty time, he served in support of real-world missions on temporary duty assignments (TDY). He first served at Al Jaber Air Base, Kuwait in support of Operation Desert Storm where he was the NCOIC (non-commissioned officer in charge) of ground radio communications. Reed also served at Prince Sultan Air Base, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for Operation Desert Focus, where he was part of a team that provided air traffic control services for the Southern No-fly Zone. Reed later worked in Italy in support of Operation Deliberate Guard (Bosnia/Herzegovina) as part of the 5th Allied Tactical Air Forces.

Reed grew up on a farm in northeast Lyon County and came to Emporia to attend ESU in 1983. After his time in the Air Force he returned to Emporia where he still resides. He currently works as the chief engineer for t3 Wireless of Council Grove, KS. Banner sponsored by Lorena Reed

Patrick Renfro: Marine, Corporal, 2007-2011 Banner sponsored by Shelley Renfro

James Resch: Sometimes war takes a while to kill a soldier. Jim was home from Vietnam 42 years before he died from his service there. Yes, he had a life, a good one, but still a life cut short by the decisions of others. Decisions like if you weren't in college you were going, and even though the people in charge knew already the war wasn't winnable you and thousands of others would continue to be sent to death and disability to serve some misbegotten ideas they had. And deciding to spray people as well as vegetation with powerful killing agents. Were they thinking skin was a better protectant than bark?

Jim was still in high school when his number came up. He graduated in 1966 and took his big brother Don's advice to join the National Guard because he'd serve here at home. He wasn't at all a hippie, wasn't an anti-war marcher, just a pretty ordinary obedient American boy who wanted to do the right thing, not shirk his duty to country. The Guard was called up from Emporia to Fort Carson in Colorado in early 1968. As a young single man it wasn't hard to move west to a beautiful area. His brother was there too. Jim was always a family guy as well as someone always trying to take care of those he cared about. So when people began to be sent to Vietnam he volunteered to go so Don would not be sent and somehow that worked. His brother remained in Colorado. Jim was always glad for that. Scared to death, he went over in November, 1968. He never talked much about his time there but made it crystal clear that his duty was not the bad stuff, his work was a supply clerk and he did not have the hellish suffering of many of our soldiers there. That said it was still front lines, still Vietnam and still war. What he shared with us were things like how big the moon was, the gigantic flying beetles, catching rats, losing his class ring in the China Sea. We did hear about the recurrent spraying of liquid "weed killer" that landed on everybody and everything. At that point, he didn't know its name or its danger.

Jim returned to civilian life in Kansas in late 1969. A year later we met and I joined his story with marriage, two sons and all the bits and pieces of a very normal, very quiet life: work, the cars, house payments, garden, painting rooms, Christmases and little vacations. Nothing any different than millions of other American men. Jim was always big on making his surroundings better. Always working to improve something, get ahead of the curve, fix it before it broke. His lawn was a dream, landscaping meticulous and pristine. My mom's saying was "Jim can fix anything" and it was true. Everything in our house worked-faucets, lights, doorknobs, stoves. Our first washer lasted 31 years under his care. And what a workshop! Sorted, labeled, organized to a T. He had a gift for organization. He tried to take care of everything in his world and to prevent future problems.

But sadly, so sadly, he could not prevent the onset of the disease that killed him. The diagnosis came the week of our son's wedding, marking the first bittersweet occasion. Three years after it was found, Jim died of lung cancer on May 26, 2012, after the pulmonologist confirmed that nothing else in his life (he wasn't a smoker) would've caused this cancer except the Agent Orange exposure in Vietnam.

Jim never regretted serving his country and we were proud of him for it. He never questioned having gone to Vietnam or having cancer or having been dealt a rotten hand but he cried his heart out because he would never be a grandpa. Bittersweet occasions continue: his first grandchild was born in October a year later. His name was placed on the Vietnam Wall in Washington DC on what would have been his 65th birthday. He is missed so very much. Jim would never have thought he deserved to be remembered among those who gave their lives but I do. Banner sponsored by Ruthann Resch

Floyd E. (Bud) Rice: U.S. Army Air Corps 1st Lieutenant P-51 Fighter Pilot – Asiatic Pacific Theater – WWII
Floyd (Bud) Rice was inducted into the Army as a RR Section Laborer on Feb 21, 1942 at Ft. Leavenworth Kansas and was honorably discharged as a 1st Lieutenant in the Air Corps on November 23, 1945. He was also a member of the Kansas Air National Guard.

Bud was a member of the 531st Fighter Squadron, 21st Fighter Group. He flew in the Battle for Iwo Jima; was awarded the Purple Heart for injuries suffered on Aug 8, 1945; Distinguished Flying Cross; Air Medal; 4 Oak Leaf Clusters and the European Middle Eastern Service Medal; he also received several Citations for extraordinary achievement in sustained air operations over the Japanese Empire. He successfully completed numerous over water missions that involved flights of over 1500 miles in the face of enemy anti-aircraft fire and air operations over the Japanese mainland and where no intermediate bases existed. Bud was proud of his service to his country and loved flying. Bud was born and raised in Ottawa Kansas, where he married the love of his life Betty Gardner just four months before the bombing of Pearl Harbor which prompted his military enlistment. After coming home he joined the Kansas Air National Guard and began a career in banking. Bud was a devoted family man and loved the outdoors and gardening. He was active in his church and many community organizations during his lifetime. Together Bud and Betty shared five children and 47 years before he went to his heavenly home on October 22, 1988 after succumbing to cancer at the VA Hospital in Topeka Kansas.
Banner sponsored by daughters Janet Peterson and Patti Shaffer.

Dan Richard: Dan was a hero in the Vietnam war and received many medals. His bravery and and sacrifice is something I admire and he never wants any attention on him. Just very humble. He is super proud of his country and is an all around amazing person who is getting recognition he deserves. Banner sponsored by Amber Swift and Family.

Bill "Jack" Richardson: Tec 5 1944-1946

Jim Richardson: Jim graduated from Emporia High in 1966 and went to work at Panhandle Pipeline for 1 year before he was drafted into the Army. Jim trained and was sent to Viet Nam where he was wounded during battle in 1968. He spent the next year in Fitz Simmons Hospital in Denver, Colorado with many different surgeries during that time. He was Honorably discharged in 1969 and was back home and continued working at Panhandle Pipeline for the next 42 years, retiring in 2008. Jim earned a Purple Heart and The Army Commendation Medal during his service. Jim and Shirley have been married 45 years and are the parents of 4 Children, Brian, Becky, Brad, and Bob, and are enjoying 11 wonderful grandchildren. Banner sponsored by Shirley Richardson

Keith Rider: My father, Keith Rider, served in the Unites States Navy, from 1942-1945. He was 30 years old at the time, and had four children. He first joined the Kansas National Guard to make extra money, as he had a growing family. While he was in training in California, my mother visited him for a week. I had a brother who was a couple of months old, and at that time nurses in the local hospital would care for children, so he stayed in the hospital, and the neighbors cared for the older children, so my mother could visit my father before he went overseas.

My father worked for Kansas Power and Light in Emporia as an engineer at the time. When he joined the Navy, he became a Seabee, who were construction engineers. He became a Chief Electrician's Mate, and was sent to the island Iwo Jima. We have a picture of him on a utility pole fixing telephone circuits during a bombing raid. In the picture, there is a noticeable gunfire going off all around him. While he was overseas, he sent wonderful love letters home to my mother. He also sent postcards to each of his children. He could only write about general news, such as what he was eating or what the weather was like. He always wanted to know news from home, especially about what his family was doing.

When my father came home from the war, he had a job waiting for him at Kansas Power and Light. Fortunately, he was not injured in the war, but he did not talk about his experiences very often. He felt honored to be a member of the United States Military, and his family was very proud of his contribution. Banner sponsored by Judy Jones.

Lawrence Ringler: Lawrence served in the United States Army from 1942-1945. He was a radar operator with the 168th AAA Gun Battalion. A staff sergeant, Lawrence was stationed in the Pacific Theater and participated in five invasions, including the Bismark Archipelago, South Phillippines, Australia, Admiralty Islands and New Guinea. Banner sponsored by Darrell Ringler.

Daniel Rios: Army, Engineer Squadron, Corporal, 371st. Banner sponsored by Sally Sanchez and Family.

Larry Risley: Navy Vietnam Petty Officer 2nd Class

Harold Roberts: Harold was born and raised on a small farm in the Welch community of Coal Creek, south of Emporia. In February 1942, Harold entered into the US Army, assigned to the 562nd Anti-Aircraft Artillery Automatic Weapons Battalion. After training, Harold spent fifteen months in Puerto Rico before preparing with this battalion to travel across the Atlantic in late 1944. Harold fought in the Rhineland Campaign, which included the Battle of Berlin and the infamous Battle of the Bulge. Harold received both the Bronze Star and the Good Conduct Medals while serving his country. After being honorably discharged, Harold returned back to make his lifetime home with wife Pearl (Wilson) in the Madison/ Greenwood county. Banner sponsored by Arlene Roberts.

Robert Robison: Specialist Four Robert D. Robison, United States Army, wonderful son, brother, husband, and father. Drafted in 1969 at the age of 20. His basic training was in Fort Leonard Wood, Mo. He served February 1970 to February 1971, as Adviser to Republic of Vietnam, MAC-V, which means Military Assistance Command Vietnam, part of J6 Advisory. His home base was Cholon, Vietnam, outside of Saigon, now known as HoChiMing City, Vietnam. He was an adviser to the South Vietnamese Army. Bob completed military obligation in February 1971, and received an Honorable Discharge. He Arrived home that same February to the biggest snow storm of the season. His best friend Danny J. Petersen was killed on January 9, 1970, while in combat at Nui Ba Dien in Tay Ninh Province, and was awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously. We are extremely grateful and blessed that Bob came home to us.
Banner sponsored by Jennifer St. Bonnett and Family

Kenneth Robinson: Ken entered the US Navy on March 3, 1968 and went to boot camp in San Diego, CA where he was nicknamed "Robby". This was an eye opening experience for a small town boy and was eight weeks. Upon graduation he spent 1 1/2 years in missle fire control school in Vallejo, CA. He was assigned to the USS Lynde McCormick DDG8 and was transferred to the USS Scofield DEG3 a few years later. Both ships were guided missile destroyers.

"For the next four years, I spent eight months a year (September– April) providing carrier support and troop gun fire support in Vietnam. This was an education in itself meeting so many new friends and seeing a lot of the world as well. I visited ports in China, Philippines, Singapore, Bangkok, Hong Kong, Australia, Japan and Vietnam. At the time my six years of service seemed to go by very slow missing holidays including four Christmas seasons away from home and family. My sacrifices are small compared to some of my friends that made the ultimate sacrifice for their country. God bless them and their families– we will never forget." Kenneth is the father of Tyler D Robinson, US Navy, who is also featured on a banner. Banner sponsored by Gaylene Robinson.

Tyler Robinson: Tyler entered the US Navy in December, 2007 and graduated from the Naval Station Great Lakes boot camp located near North Chicago, IL in February, 2008. He was then assigned to the Nuclear Field A School and Power School in Charleston, SC until December, 2008. After attending Submarine Welding School in Groton, CT, he reported to the USS Jimmy Carter in Bangor, WA. Tyler served on the USS Jimmy Carter from January 2012- November 2013. He served four missions that were vital to national security and spent 120 days at a time at sea. Tyler advanced to the rank of 1st Class Petty Officer and led his division in work scheduling and training junior personnel. Tyler is the son of Kenneth W. Robinson, US Navy, who is also featured on a banner. Banner sponsored by Gaylene Robinson.

Leland "Red" Rodgers: Red enlisted into the Army National Guard on June 27, 1950. Red went to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri for his basic training and Advanced Individual Training as an Infantryman. At this time Red was in Company A 137th Infantry as a rifleman. On January 8th, 1951, Red transferred services and enlisted into the US Air Force as a heavy equipment operator. The Air Force further trained his him to be a Parachute Packer in Rantoul, Illinois. Red was then sent to March Air Force Base Riverside, California where he was getting ready to go overseas. He then had a short stay in Germany followed by a long stay in Japan where Red earned the Korean Service Medal. When his four year enlistment in the Air Force was coming to a close he elected to get out of the Armed Forces. Red then received his Honorable Discharge on January 8, 1955. Banner sponsored by Kevin Rodgers and Family.

Christobal Sipriano Rodriquez: US Air Force Airman First Class 1964-1968

I join the Air Force after graduating High School. I have always wanted to travel and the Air Force Recruiter promised me the world! So I enlisted and went to basic training in San Antonio, Texas for eight weeks. Well, my new world was McConnell AFB in Wichita, Kansas!

The 323rd munitions maintenance squadron consisted of training the F-105 fighter jets, pilots, aircraft mechanics and munitions crew. In February of 1967 my orders were for Tan Son Nhut AFB, Saigon 34th Tactical Fighter Squadron which consisted of F-105 fighter jets. We stop in the Philippines where I was place in a C-130 cargo plane and on my way to Vietnam.

As we were approaching the base I noticed there were no runway lights and the plane was descending. My first thought was we are going to crash. My heart started beating fast. I was afraid and in my mind, my life was over and I just got there. I was praying to God then plane hit the runway and suddenly the runway lights came on. The aircraft was quickly taxied into the big hanger. Again all the lights were turned off. I have never seen so much darkness. This was the beginning of my time in the Vietnam War. Little did I know how it would affect my life forever.

One pilot and I got very close because he was sort of my big brother. He always asked if I had written to my parents to let them know that I was okay. The captain was 31 years old, married with a 2 year old girl. He would show me pictures of his family, he was very proud of them. He constantly read the bible, and shared phrases with me. I remember one day he seemed to be down and was quiet. I had never seen him that way. When I asked him what was wrong he responded that a flight of four would be going to Hanoi to bomb a petroleum factory. He looked do

to the floor and said, "They will be waiting for us". I tried to reassure him by joking, "You are slick, and you will make it back!" He replied, "You bet! I will see you when I get back". I saluted all four pilots. For some reason I kept thinking that he wasn't coming back, why? Finally, hours later the flight was retuning, but only three jets were in formation. Captain did not return. He was shot down with gun fire and went down. I did not know how to react. I felt sad, lonely, hurt and guilt for thinking he was not coming back. I had a flashback of his wife and little girl. I never met them but I felt like we were always good friends. This is only one incident of many men who died in missions while I was there. I would salute them, wish them luck, pray come back. In 1967 I lost ten pilots friends who had touched my heart and soul. The attitude of many commanders was to get over it, this is war! This took a big toll on me. My belief was to honor the dead; grieve them. They were men who I had the honor to know them. They were men who had died defending our country. How could I ignore that! These men touched me and when they did not return, my heart knew what they went through. It was sad because most died alone. I thought of their families and the loss they would have. It was a nightmare that never ended but I was to put it behind me!

When I came home I thought I left the war behind, but little did I know that I placed it deep inside of me, and only tried to pretend that I was normal again. Many years have passed since I experience this awful war. I will never forget this trauma. It will always be with me till the day I die. If you meet me, you would never know. I like to laugh, talk and joke. Today, I am diagnosed with PTSD, under medication and psychiatric care. My wife, my kids understand what I am going through. They are my biggest support. I have three grandkids that are the love of my life. I know I have something to live for regardless of my fears, experiences, and bad memories of a terrible war.

Pedro M Rodriquez: WWII Veteran US Army, Private First Class Headquarters and Transportation Corps Detachment

My dad was known for his patriotism. He truly believed it was his duty and right to stand tall and fight for the country he loved so much. Not only did he believe, when called, he served his country with pride. As many in our community, he was honored and felt his duty to join and defend our country. He was one of three sons my grandparents had to say goodbye to, keep in prayers for their safety and return. He was a young father with a wife and a newborn son.

Along with my dad about fifty-three local Mexican American men either volunteered or were recruited, a large percentage for the small community living on the segregated south side of town. Every family that lived on or around South Arundel was impacted by someone in their family or knew of someone who had left for the war. No different than any other families in America, these families were being separated from their loved ones, not knowing when or worse yet, if they would be returning. The entire Mexican American community had a sense of quietness and incompleteness while the men were gone. The women and families became each other's support system, becoming a stronger community.

After the World War II, many returned home to their community, some did not. WWII was an era of time some men did not want to discuss. Our dad never revealed the details of what he did or saw. While we have our regret of not asking more about his time in the service, our guess is it made a profound impact on his life to appreciate our country and not take it for granted. We do know that he was passionate about the importance of serving one's country, the power of voting, value of the community and the display of patriotism. He felt it was his civic duty to keep up to date with politics and vote in every election- local and national.

Our dad returned to his job on the railroad. He took care of his wife and was blessed with eight children. Through his work in the community, he taught us the importance of civic leadership and community engagement. He was very proud of his sons who joined the service to serve their country.

Our family is proud to know that our dad, when called, served the country that he loved so much. Today we cherish and honor his legacy of being a proud American. Banner sponsored by Armida Martinez

Shawn Rumold: Shawn graduated boot camp on Oct 13, 1989 and entered Aviation Refueling School in Lakehurst, NJ and graduated second highest in class. He was then sent to the USS New Orleans LPH-11 stationed in San Diego, CA. While aboard the USS New Orleans LPH-11 he refueled aircraft on the flight deck of the ship. Shawn was involved in the Support of Operations Desert Storm, Desert Saber and Desert Shield from December 1st, 1990 to August 28, 1991. He served as a member of CTG-36/CTF-156, the largest amphibious task force to deploy from the West Coast of the United States in 25 years. Significant accomplishments included the off-load of 1,700 Marine combat troops on G-Day and aviation mine countermeasures in the North Persian Gulf, ten nautical miles (19 km) off the coast of Kuwait. He also was part of helping the ship pump over 1 million gallons of jet fuel during that time. Awards that the Ship as a whole received are as follows: Navy Meritorious Unit Commendation, Navy Battle "E", Navy Expeditionary Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Southwest Asia Service Medal, Kuwait Liberation Medal (Kuwait). Shawn also received the medal for Expert Pistol. Banner sponsored by Nancy Rumold

William E. Runge: United States Marine Corps. Born May 26, 1924 at Aberdeen, South Dakota, William Runge enlisted into the United States Marine Corps at IRS, CRD, Omaha, Nebraska on January 7, 1944, to serve D of NE years. His home town at that time was Hebron, Nebraska. He qualified as a rifle sharpshooter and trained as a military Guard Patrolman. He was stationed in the Asiatic Pacific arena. He was honorably discharged with the rank of Corporal on May 3, 1946 from the Separation Battalion, Redistribution Regiment at Camp Joseph H. Pendleton, MT & RC, SDA, Oceanside, California. He returned home to Hebron, Nebraska. He attended Doane College in Nebraska and later married Gwendolyn Thompson. They had one daughter (Cynthia), and three sons (Thomas, Mark and Robert). He passed away on June 6, 1991. Banner sponsored by Mark Runge and Family.

Willis Russell: Willis enlisted in the US Army during his last semester as a senior in Emporia High School in 1943. After boot camp, he was sent Africa, Sicily, Rome, Southern France, Rhineland, and Central Europe as a truck and jeep driver. While in Rome, he had the chance to visit the Vatican– maybe a premonition that he was going to get mixed up with a bunch of Catholics once he married. As kids, we got to take several of his souvenirs to school to share. He was honorably discharged in October of 1945. That same year in December, he went on a double date and ended up asking his friend's date, Marie Wendling, to go out with him the next night. Less than three years later they were married. Mom and Dad lived all their married lived in Emporia and raised 5 kids. We have lots of good memories of things Dad did with us, but when we wanted to go camping, Dad would always tell us that he had had enough of sleeping in a tent and using a gun to last a lifetime. He died in April of 1984. Banner sponsored by Donna Russell

Delbert Ryno: Army Tech Sergeant Engineers

Robert A. "Bob" Sauder: Bob along with a twin brother Ray, was born December 24, 1926 in Madison, KS. Bob and Ray enlisted in the Navy in December of 1944. They were sent to basic training at USNTC, Great Lakes, Illinois on December 22, 1944...two days before their 18th birthday. Bob contracted scarlet fever during basic training which necessitated him repeating boot camp. Legend has it that the twin's mother, Bess, called the commander of the base requesting that her twins stay together. As Bob always told the story, while marching in rank with his new group of recruits he saw a soldier ahead who looked a lot like his brother Ray. Sure enough, unbeknownst to Bob, Ray had repeated his basic training in order to stay with his brother so they could serve together. After boot camp Bob completed training at the Naval Training School (Advanced Aviation Metalsmiths), NATTC, Norman, OK. Bob and Ray were assigned to the aircraft carrier the USS Boxer (CV-21) in the Pacific Theater. Bob served as an aviation metalsmith and also bragged that he achieved a perfect score on the aviation recognition test. Bob was honorably discharged April 26, 1946 with the rank of Seaman, 1st Class (AM). He received the Victory Medal and the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal.

After leaving the US Navy, Bob attended the University of Kansas in Lawrence. He eventually returned home to help his father, Aaron, with the family business, Sauder Tank Company. Bob eventually assumed the presidency of the company which was now Sauder Industries and moved it to Emporia. Throughout his career, Bob developed many new products related to his business and received many patents, both foreign and domestic. In 1967 Bob was invited to the white house to meet President Lyndon B. Johnson where he was named one of the top small business owners in the country. In 1951 Bob married Paula (Rudolph) Sauder of Clarksville, TN. They resided in both Emporia and Naples, FL. They had three children, Paul, Anne, and Julie, ten grandchildren and to date, five great-grandchildren. Bob passed away January 16, 2014 at the age of 87. Banner sponsored his family.

Donald E. Schiesser: The first part of September in 1946 the Army recruiter came to talk to my friend who had just graduated from High School and was interested in going into the Army. I asked if it would be okay if I could be there too, as I wanted to go into the Army Air Corps. My friend, Marvin, signed up and I also got the paperwork for myself. I wanted to go to college and the GI Bill would allow me to do that. I had two problems as I had to convince my parents and I was to graduate in May 1947. I talked to my principal and he told me I had enough credits to graduate with the credit I would get from being in the military. My parents agreed with me and both gave signed permission to enter the military. I thought I had all the paperwork as I had my adoption papers but the military said I had to show proof of my birth, including names. My mother wrote to where they got me and it took 5 months to obtain the necessary documentation for me to enlist in the military. This delay caused me to be a Korean vet instead of a WW2 vet as WW2 ended Dec 31, 1946. I was sworn into the Army Air Corps at Ft Riley and then sent to Army Basic Training in San Antonio, TX. While there they took a photograph of the "Army Air Corps Emblem" made up of military personnel. There must be 1500+ in that photograph. I donated a copy of the 20"x 20" photo to Emporia State. It is displayed in the Military room at the school. I remember our pay was $49 a month. I was sent to Scott Field in Illinois; for training as a Radio Operator Mechanic on B25's. I graduated and was then sent to Langley Field in Virginia. I was then sent back to Scott Field as soon as we got there, for further training, as the B25's were deleted from active service. My pay when I made Sgt. was $90 per month and I was sending $45 a month home to my parents as Dad had fallen off a ladder and couldn't work due to his fractured back. I took a quick course in how to be an instructor. I taught 2 ½ yrs. in Maintenance and Operations of Aircraft Navigational Equipment, which was extended for 1 year. At this time the Air Force had half the troops in Air Force Blues with black work boots/oxfords and the rest of us with Khakis and OD (olive drab) uniforms with brown work boots/ oxfords "Brown Boots", this was sort of a status symbol. It let everyone know we had been in the Army Air Corps before it became the Air Force. I was then discharged and was in the Air Force Reserve, 9723 ARS, 442nd Troop Carrier Wing, in Korea. I was married on Nov 11, 1951 to my wife, Dorothy Reaka. We will be married 65 years this Veteran's Day. We have 4 children, Debra Moser, Joleen Day, Kathy Jackson and Jeff (ESU Grad). I started to college at KSTC in the fall of 1953 under the WW2 GI Bill. We lived in "Vet city", B1 as I remember. We were on the north end of an old barracks converted into 5 apartments. The rent was $30 per month with all utilities paid. If I remember correctly there were 8 of these barracks west of Morse Hall. I do remember that I received $110 per month with all books and tuition paid. That was why I wanted the WW2 GI Bill. The Air Force decided they needed me again so I was recalled in 1955. I was sent to Forbes AFB, Topeka KS., 2027 (AACS) Airways and Air Communications Systems. When I was recalled my Commander let me off duty for one semester to finish college. I graduated in January 1957 with a degree in Physics and Math. I am a Charter member of Sigma Phi Sigma (Physics National Honor Society). I applied for a direct commission and received the following answer: "Fully qualified but due to manpower and budgeting limitations there would be no direct commissions awarded this year". I was sent to Elmendorf AFB in Alaska the fall of 1957, 1930 AACS. We went all over Alaska from Pt. Barrow and Bethel to Valdez troubleshooting ground to air equipment. The next stop - King Salmon Alaska, 1930-1 AACS, which is located 100 miles north of the Aleutian Islands maintaining navigational equipment at the airstrip there. We were part of the Dew Line Early Warning system that covered Alaska and Canada. In 1958, I was sent to McCord AFB Washington and discharged. I have 27 ½ years' Service, which includes 6 ½ yrs. active duty and 21 yrs. in Reserve and Kansas National Guard. I served as Maintenance Officer in the 169th Combat Engineers, Pilot in 137th Transportation Co., Supply and Support Tech in Co B, 169 FWD Support Battalion. I served in the 9th, 10th, and 11th Air Forces. I served before, during, and after the Cold War and Korean War. I retired as a Chief Warrant Officer 3. I have a grandson, Mark Moser (ESU Grad) an Air Force veteran who served in Bahrain during Desert Storm, a Son-in-Law, Larry Jackson, a Retired Army veteran who served in Iraq during Desert Shield/Desert Storm, and my Granddaughter (ESU Grad) Laurie Moser Dunn's husband, Richard Dunn, is Active Duty Army who served in Iraq and Afghanistan 6 times. "I have no regrets and would do it again!" Banner sponsored by Debra Moser, Joleen Day, Kathy Jackson, and Jeff Schiesser.

Robert (Bob) Schreiber: Bob served in the U.S. Army from 1943 to 1945 during World War II. He was born and raised in Garden City, Kansas. He was active in civic organizations and the Chamber of Commerce. He was also the owner of Schreiber Motors, which was founded in 1927 by his father E.M. Schreiber and J.W. Nolan. In 1997 he was named a Time Magazine Qualify Dealer Award winner. The banner is sponsored by his son Mark, daughter-in-law Angie, and their children Ben and Gretchen Schreiber.

Rose Mary Hohne Scheve Senn: Rose was born on July 8, 1922 in Olpe, Kansas. She graduated from Neosho Rapids High School and Providence Hospital School of Nursing in Kansas City. Rose Mary enlisted in the U.S. Army on April 1, 1945 as a Second Lieutenant. She was stationed at Camp Carson in Colorado and later at Winter General Army Hospital in Topeka Kansas. Rose Mary was discharged from the U.S. Army on May 2, 1946. Returning to Emporia, she married Fred J.Scheve, and later Fred Senn. She currently resides in Emporia, Kansas.

James Leon Seimears: James Leon "Smiley" Seimears was born May 30, 1948 and raised in Severy, KS. From the time he was in 2nd grade, he wanted to be a Marine and always requested to sing the Marine Corp hymn during music class. Immediately following graduation in 1966, he joined the Marine Corps. As part of his service, he was in Vietnam from November 1967 to December 1968 as gunner and crew chief on a medevac helicopter with the HMM 363 squadron. During his leave, he married his sweetheart, Tricia, and they moved to California to finish his last year of service. They returned to Kansas to raise their family and he worked in construction until 2000. Leon and Tricia relocated to Emporia in November 2010 due to his failing health. After a courageous fight, he passed away May 23, 2013 from ALS. He is survived by his wife, 4 children, Julie, James Jr, June, and Jonathan, and 9 grandchildren. Semper Fi. Banner sponsored by June Ary, Julie Highley, James Seimears Jr, and Jonathan Seimears.

Ed Shupe: Army Air Corps, Staff Sergeant, 1941-1945 Banner sponsored by Charman Murphy

Ron Slaymaker: One of the really great decisions I have made in my life was to join the US Army. I trained at Ft. Carson in basic infantry. When orders came down for permanent assignments, 5 went to Panama and 150 went to Korea. Panama here I come! I was part of a heavy mortar company in the jungle warfare training division. It was a time of learning, maturing, and great leadership training. Useful things as I have gone through life.

Frank Sloat: Frank was 21 years of age when he enlisted in July 1965. He spent his boot camp in Paris Island, South Carolina followed by Camp Gieger in North Carolina. He was stationed at Camp Lejeune 2nd Marine Division in November 1965. On October 1966, he was sent to Chu-Lai, Vietnam for a thirteen month tour. Sloat's tour of duty was cut short on March 15, 1967 when he was wounded, leading a reconnaissance patrol. Frank's unit was ambushed and he was struck in the leg by an AK-47 assault rifle that sent bullet fragments into his liver and bladder, also injuring his femoral artery. A soldier packed his wound with mud to keep him from bleeding to death. Another soldier dragged Sloat 50 yds before being hit himself. Mike Riley, another soldier that was 19 at the time, noticed a rescue chopper drawing close and, after seeing that Sloat had a bone sticking out of his leg, picked Sloat up and carried him to the chopper. While in ICU, Sloat had most of his leg muscles cut out due to the loss of blood. On September 30, 1967, Sloat received military retirement from the Marines due to his injury. He received the Purple Heart for his bravery.

Frank was a VFW Commander for four years and District Commander for 1 year for District 4. He is currently the VFW Quarter Master and is the Color Guard Commander for the VFW at all parades and funerals. Sloat has continued to battle complications due to his injuries received while in battle. Frank has since lost his bladder due to cancer and has survived throat cancer and still battles on! Banner sponsored by Corey Wiltz

Max Smiley: Army, Corporal, WWII, 1942-1946. Banner sponsored by Rusty Smiley and Family.

Warren Ralph Smith: From Americus, Warren served in the Marines as a machine gunner on a tank of the 1st Armored Amphibian Batallion in the action of the South Pacific, Guam, and Marshall Islands.Banner sponsored by Doris Smith

Richard Solis: Richard served in the Air Force from 1954-1958. He had basic training at Amarillo Air Force Base, Texas. Richard was in Japan for two years. He was an aircraft mechanic for jet fighters. He received the National Defense Service Medal. He passed away on September 11, 2011. Banner sponsored by Jessie Solis

Stanley Oliver Sommers: Army, Sergeant, 2 Years of Service. Banner sponsored by Karen Sommers

Robert J. (Bob) Spatz: Bob was born and raised in Lebo, KS. Bob enlisted in the Air Force on March 12, 1942. He trained at Ft. Leavenworth, KS. He became an airplane maintenance technician and attained the rank of Technical Sergeant. Bob served in the 17th Bombardment Squadron in both the American and Pacific Theaters as well as serving in the States. He was in the Air Offensive Japan and Eastern Mandates campaigns. Bob recalled flying over Tokyo after the bombing and seeing the utter devastation. He received an American Service Medal, Asiatic Pacific Service Medal, World War II Victory Medal, and Good Conduct Medal. Bob was honorably discharged on December 22,1945.

Junior Spellman: Junior was born March 17, 1925 in Americus, KS. He was inducted into the U.S. Marine Corps on March 24, 1944. He was a marksman and an anti-tank gun crewman in the Pacific area. He saw action on Okinawa and Ryukyu Islands from April 1 to August 13, 1945 and served in China during the occupation from September 30, 1945 to April 28, 1946. He was honorably discharged from the First Separation Company MCB on May 25,1946 with the rank of Sergeant. He died march 26, 1985 and is survived by his wife Isabelle and children Gary, Jim, and Karen.

Will Spencer: Air Force. Banner sponsored by Carol Spencer

Harold F. Spencer M.D.: Lieutenant Commander Harold Spencer entered the US Navy in 1942, closing his medical practice in Garnett, KS. He received further training at the Great Lakes training center in Minnesota, and in San Diego, California. He served on a hospital ship in the Pacific. He entered Nagasaki a month after the bomb was dropped and assisted in freeing Japanese POW's. After the war, he served as a family physician in Empoira until his death in 1962.

Frank Stair: CS3 1951-1957 Banner sponsored by the Stair Family.

Robert D. Standiferd: Bob was born in Arvonia, Kansas and graduated from Lebo High School in 1939. He was inducted in the Army August 1, 1942 at Ft. Leavenworth Kansas. Bob did basic training at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma. He was shipped to the Pacific Theater in September of 1943. Where with the 182nd Infantry he was a Heavy Truck Driver in the Bismark Archipelago, New Guinea and the Southern Philippines campaigns. In November of 1945 he was waiting to go into Japan when orders came to come stateside. He was separated from the service on December 6th at Ft. Logan, Colorado at the rank of Sergeant. He was on Leyte when General McArthur returned to the Philippines. Bob shared memories of the Japanese bombs trying to hit McArthur's headquarters, which was only a block from his tent and how he didn't get much sleep then. Life long friends were made in the service and on a trip home during basic Bob brought home a fellow soldier, who married one of his sisters. After the service Bob married Cecilia "Susie" Soyez from Marion, KS. They raise three daughters and one son in Emporia. He retired after working for the Santa Fe Railroad for 37 years in 1983. Bob died in 1994 and was laid to rest in the Lincoln Cemetery in Lebo, KS. Banner sponsored by Barbara Rotramel, Robert Standiferd, Linda Davis, and Jeannie Jenkins.

Clifford Stewart: Cliff was the brightest in his high school class and a friend to all. A Track and Field athlete, everyone knew he would succeed. Clifford Eldon Stewart finished senior year and graduated high school at the top of his class in 1943. Soon drafted, he was sent to Fort Leavenworth. At 19 years old, and like so many, he found himself headed to fight in a war he doubted he would survive.

Cliff was assigned to the 87th Infantry Division & Quartermaster as a transport truck driver supplying fuel to troops on the front lines. He was good at anything he set his mind to. Cliff was soon noticed and permanently assigned his own truck. He always considered this one of the few positives he encountered on the harsh European front. The canvas roof of the truck gave him shelter from the weather and a warmer place to sleep.

After completing Tours in Rhineland and Ardennes, Cliff was Honorably Discharged and returned to his home in Kansas City, Mo. He met Gloria Ritterhoff through friends, fell in love and was married; a marriage that lasted 65 years. Cliff worked for Firestone Tire & Rubber after the war. He began as a salesman but his success and likability earned him a promotion and a transfer in 1964 to Emporia, KS. He loved the small town atmosphere of the community and eventually became owner of the Emporia Firestone store. Cliff and Gloria had two children, Skip Stewart and Marcia Law. They are the grandparents of 8 and great grandparents of 7. Cliff and Gloria returned to France years later to look for a small village he helped liberate where people had been so grateful at the close of the war. Sadly, the physical location could not be found but memories remained vivid. Clifford Stewart died in 2012, thankful for his family and every day after the war, which he considered a gift.
Banner sponsored by: Gloria Stewart, Skip and Kay Stewart, and Marcia and Rick Law.

Max R. Stewart Sr.: Max was born and raised in Nebraska before moving to Emporia. In May 1942 he entered the military in the Army Air Corps and commissioned as Second Lieutenant on October 1, 1943. His plane was shot down over France and he served as a German prisoner of was from March 1, 1944, until April of 1945 in Stalag Luft 3 located in Sagan, Poland. Banner sponsored by the Stewart Family.

Howard E Swan: Howard was born May 26, 1929 at Lebo, KS. He graduated from Lebo High School in 1947. Howard was inducted into the US Army in June 1951 and discharged July 1953. After the Army he learned the meat cutting trade at the Lebo Locker Plant. He married Nelda Combes on May 26, 1954. Howard and Nelda moved to Emporia in 1956 and Howard worked for A&P as a meat cutter for three years and and for Hopkins Manufacturing for 26 years. They have three children, Linda Kelly, Steve Swan, and Michael Swan. 8 grandchildren, 13 great grandchildren. Howard was a member of the 1st Congregational Church. He passed away February 14, 1985 after suffering a coronary. Banner sponsored by Nelda Swan and Family.

Thomas E. Tholen: Warrant Officer, Company B, 137th Infantry, 35th Division, U.S. Army, December 23, 1940 – November 29, 1945

Tom Tholen was born in Emporia in 1919. As a Kansas State Teachers College (now Emporia State University) student, Tom and many of his friends had joined the Emporia National Guard to earn money for their college tuition. Their Guard unit of 115 enlisted men and six offices was sworn into federal service on December 23, 1940, and the 35th Division was mobilized for what was to be a period of one year. Company B trained at Camp Robinson, Arkansas, where they were joined by other National Guard volunteers and then draftees to bring the 35th Division strength to about 15,000 troops. Following the December 7, 1941, bombing of Pearl Harbor, the 35th Division was sent to Fort Ord, California; Company B was assigned to perform guard duty on the Golden Gate Bridge which was assumed to be a prime Japanese target. In March 1943, the company was sent to Camp Rucker, Alabama, for additional training, then to mountainous areas of West Virginia for field maneuvers in snow, and finally to Camp Kilmer, New Jersey for troop transport to England. During the ten-week period of final combat training in Cornwall, England, the men of Company B, 137th Infantry, 35th Division saw Allied Forces from Wales coming south to the seaports, and watched ship after ship sail by on June 6, 1944. The 35th Division waded ashore on Omaha Beach on July 6, 1944, to relieve the 29th Division which had taken heavy casualties during the June 6 D-Day invasion and immediate aftermath.

In Tom's words, "The first thing that hit me was the terrible stench. Everywhere one looked there was much death. . . . Bodies were placed in mattress ticks and stacked like cord wood. . . . We relieved the 29th Division, which was the D-Day assault division, about five miles inland, immediately in front of the city of St. Lo . . . . As we met the 29th Division veterans, I noticed their eyes had a spooky look—as if to say, 'I could tell you what you're going to see and feel, but I won't. I'll let you discover it on your own.'"

For the next seven months, the 35th Division served with General Patton's 3rd Army in the drive across France, living in rain-soaked fox holes or bombed-out buildings and steadily driving the Germans back. Tom served as a Warrant Officer, keeping the books for the battalion, handling the payroll matters, and writing the condolence letters to the parents of his fallen comrades for his commander to sign. His "office" was a foot locker, which went where he did. In March of 1945, the 35th Division was assigned to the 9th Army under General Simpson to go further north, across the Ruhr River, then the Rhine River, finally coming to a halt on the west bank of the Elbe River at Magdeburg, Germany – about 80 miles southwest of Berlin – to allow the Russian Allies to finish the job. Following the May 8, 1945, surrender of the Germans to end WWII in Europe, Tom remained in Germany doing occupation duty until his discharge on November 29th, 1945. Tom had been in the campaigns in Normandy, Northern France, the Rhineland, the Ardennes, and Central Europe.

After his military service, Tom settled in Emporia with his college sweetheart Betty who had become his wife and their daughter Jan, born while Tom was in France. The family grew with five more children, all six of them eventually graduating from KSTC as had Tom and Betty. Tom was a businessman in Emporia, residing there until his death in 2003. -- Banner sponsored by Judy Olander, Annie Butler, Bill Tholen, Mike Tholen, and Joe Tholen.

Grant Timmerman: Grant was born in Americus, Kansas on February 19, 1919. Educated in the public schools of Emporia, Kansas, he graduated from Emporia High School in 1936. He played the saxophone in the high school band for two years, enjoyed hunting small game, and read, wrote, and spoke French and Russian. He attended Kansas State Teacher's College in Emporia for one year, where he took a pre-engineering course. In the summer of 1937, he went to California and worked as an electric welder at San Mateo, California.

He enlisted in the United States Marine Corps in San Francisco on October 28, 1937 and went through United States Marine Corps Recruit Training at San Diego. His first assignment was at the Puget Sound Navy Yard in Bremerton, Washington. After a few weeks duty there, Pvt Timmerman went to Mare Island Naval Shipyard, California, where he boarded the old China transport, USS Henderson.

He crossed the 180th meridian on April 10, 1938, was duly initiated into the Imperial Domain of the Golden Dragon and arrived in Wusong, China, on the May 5, 1938. Assigned to the Motor Transport Company of the 4th Marines, Pvt Timmerman served as a truck driver and as a motorcycle dispatch rider. Once in Shanghai, he and another Marine observed a white woman surrounded by a crowd of menacing Chinese. Playing the part of "Marines to the rescue," he and his buddy dispersed the angry crowd and stood by until a policeman was summoned. The lady turned out to be the wife of a U.S. Navy commander. A Letter of Commendation and appreciation from the commander were added to the young Marine's record book.

It was July 1940 before Pvt Timmerman was promoted to private first class. When the usual 18-month tour of duty was completed, PFC Timmerman requested that his tour be extended. His request was granted and it was thirty-three months in all before he set foot on the California shore again. Returning to Mare Island in April 1941, he was given duty at the Naval Prison there and stayed at that post until his discharge at the completion of his four year enlistment on October 27, 1941.

He went back to electric welding and got a job at the ship yard of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation in San Francisco, welding electrical fixtures and armor plates on destroyers. After five weeks of civilian life, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and in February 1942, he reenlisted and was reappointed to his old rank of private first class.

Since he had only been out of the Marine Corps for four months, the 23-year-old China Marine did not have to repeat basic training, but was immediately sent to the Transport Company at the Marine Corps Base at San Diego. Five weeks later he went to San Francisco as a clerk in the office of the Commanding General of the Department of the Pacific, where he stayed two months. Next assigned to the 2nd Tank Battalion of the 2nd Marine Division, he was promoted to corporal in July, he was advanced to sergeant in October, and in November was once more on his way overseas. His battalion went to Wellington, New Zealand, and when he crossed the equator, Sgt Timmerman was initiated in the realm of King Neptunus Rex.

After a period of intensive training in Wellington, the 2nd Division made their landing on Tarawa, Gilbert Islands on November 20, 1943. However, it was two days later that Sgt Timmerman came in with the tanks. In December, they went to Hawaii for a rest and more training, and in May 1944 left for another combat mission — the last for Timmerman.

He landed on Saipan on D-Day, June 15, 1944, and on June 28, sustained a slight shrapnel wound in the right forearm. A few days later — on July 8, — Sgt Timmerman's tank, of which he was tank commander, was advancing a few yards ahead of the infantry when the attack was held up by a series of Japanese pillboxes and trenches. The sergeant had been firing the tank's antiaircraft gun during the vigorous attack but when progress was halted, he prepared to fire the 75 mm gun. Exposing himself to the enemy, he stood up in the open turret of his tank to warn the infantry to hit the deck because of the muzzle blast of the 75 mm. A Japanese grenade came hurtling through the air aimed in the direction of the open turret. Sgt Timmerman fearlessly covered the opening with his own body to prevent the grenade from killing his crew and the grenade exploded on his chest, killing him instantly. Although two members of the crew received slight wounds from the grenade, none were killed, all the larger fragments being taken by Sgt Timmerman. For that his country bestowed its highest honor upon him - the Medal of Honor. The Medal and also a Bronze Star earned earlier in the Saipan campaign, were presented to his parents on July 8, 1945, the first anniversary of his death, in their home by Col Norman E. True of the Marine Barracks in Great Lakes, Illinois. This quiet informal presentation was made at the request of the Marine's mother.

Initially buried in the 2nd Marine Division Cemetery on Saipan, Marianas Island, Sgt Timmerman was later reinterred in the National Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu, Hawaii.

Eric Tincher: Eric Jon Tincher is currently a Captain in the US Air National Guard. He has served 21 years total between the USANG and the US Army Reserves (USAR). He served during Operation Iraqi Freedom and Operation Enduring Freedom. He was awarded the Bronze star for his service in Iraq. He was raised in Osage County and graduated high school from Marias De Cygne in 1987. He then attended ESU for his Bachelor's and Master's Degree. Banner sponsored by LuAnn Tincher

Marcell B "Bernard" Tinkler: Bernard was born to Irl N. and Maudie (Mounkes) in Gypsum, Kansas, December 12, 1921. He married Anna Mae Nickey on December 27, 1942 in Chicago, Illinois. He served as an Airborn Radio Operator/ Navigator during WWII from 1942 to 1945. As a Corporal in the service, he spent time in Northern Africa and Italy in the Rome Arno Campaign. His medals include a Good Conduct Medal, Victory Medal, Overseas Bars FAME Service Medal, and a Bronze Star American Theatre Service Medal. He was discharged in Amarillo, Texas, November 14, 1945.

He returned to McPherson, Kansas to be with his wife and await his firstborn's birth due in just a little over a month of his return. He then went back to Gypsum to work on the family farm until he entered K-State in the fall of 1946, graduating in the spring of 1950. Bernard was a career Vocational Agriculture Teacher and FFA Advisor, also teaching welding. He taught in Humboldt, Kansas for 27 years and at Altoona-Midway for 8 years. He was active in Boy Scouts, serving as scout master in Humboldt. He joined the staff of Wilderness Scout Camp near Independence, Kansas, later becoming camp director. He also was camp director for the Quivira Scout Ranch near Sedan, Kansas. He was later presented the distinguished Silver Beaver Award. Bernard was a member of the Humboldt United Methodist Church, active in the Biblesta Parade, Lions' Club, Methodist Men's Club, Boy Scout Silver Beaver Honorary Leaders, Southeast Kansas Silver Beavers Club, and was a past President of the Humboldt Nutrition Site Council of Humboldt Senior Center. He and his wife had six sons, three daughters, 19 grandchildren and 31 great grandchildren. Banner sponsored by Jessica Roby and Family.

Lupe Torres: Air Force, WWII, 1943-1946, China– Burma– India Banner sponsored by Leona Cisneros

Ray Toso: Army, Spec 4, 1968-1969

Lee Tucker: US Army, SP5, 3 Years of service, 1967 to 1970. Senior Medical Aidman 2 1/2 Years. Fort Richardson, Anchorage, Alaska. 1st Battalion, 60th Infantry. Served as a Medic, Platoon Clerk, and Dispatcher for Medical Platoon Assignments.

Wayne VanGundy: Wayne enlisted in the Army Air Corp November 1942. He completed basic training in Jefferson Barrack, Missouri. After basic training he was a cadet at Michigan State University. Wayne completed navigation school as a 2nd Lt. in Hondo, Texas on May 20,1944. His overseas training was in Nebraska where he was assigned to the 504th bomb group as a navigator on a B29. The 504th bomb group of the 20th Air Force, was stationed on Tinian at the Marianna Islands in the Pacific January 1, 1945. His squad completed 35 bombing and mining missions on Japan. About halfway through his missions Wane received word that his father had died. Wayne recalls the last conversation he had with his father when he asked Wayne what his future plans were. He informed his father he would be coming back home to farm when he completed his missions. Wayne's last mission was the last of August 1945 just before the release of the atomic bomb. Wayne was discharged in November of 1945 as a 1st Lt. When Wayne returned home he kept his promise to his dad to farm on the family farm near Americus where he still resides with his wife of 69 Years, Emma Lou Rains VanGundy, who he married February 17,1946. They had four children Marcia, Marlene, David, and Michael. In 1976 Mike joined his father on the family farm forming the VanGundy Farms partnership. Wayne and Emma Lou have 12 grandchildren and currently 16 great grandchildren. Banner sponsored by Sharon VanGundy and Family.

William F. Wagner: Bill was drafted into th army in 1955. After spending two weeks in Camp Chaffee Arkansas, policing the area, was transferred to Fort Riley for basic training with the Old 10th Mountain Division. After basic training he was shipped to Germany where he participated in Operation Gyroscope. Bill received the Expert Rifleman medal and was on the regimental rifle team. Bill was also squad leader and 1st gunner of a machine gun squad. After release from the army, he spent 6 years in the reserves and received his honorable discharge and rank of Army Specialist 4. Bill was married to Rose M. Wagner a registered nurse at Newman hospital and 3 daughters, Christine, Jackie, and Rosalie. Banner sponsored by the Wagner Family.

Sam Wagoner: Sam enlisted in the US Army January 2, 1952 during the Korean War. He attended basic training and qualified as Artilleryman for his Military Occupational Skill (MOS) at Ft. Sill, Oklahoma. He was assigned to US Army Europe and served in the 567th Field Artillery Battalion at Schwabisch Gmund, Germany specializing in the deployment and operation of the 155 mm Self Propelled Howitzer. As a member of the Allied occupation forces, he and others stood guard during the early and tense cold war era to protect against communist expansion from Eastern Europe and provide the opportunity for Western Europe to rebuild under the Marshal Plan following its destruction in WWII. US Army Europe was successful in this mission throughout their history, owing to the vigilance, sacrifice, and service of thousands of young married men like Sam. During his service he attained the rank of Corporal and returned to the United States in late 1953 where he was honorably discharged December 5,1953. Banner sponsored by Lori Clark and Family.

Charles William Wayman: Army, Master Sergeant, 5 Years of Service. Banner sponsored by Karen Sommers.

Edward J Weidner: Edward Weidner was born in 1920 in Olpe, KS. He was raised and worked in the area until 1942 when he enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Corps. He became a Flight Engineer and rose to the rank of Staff Sergeant until 1945 when he was discharged. While in the service he married Mary Davis in 1943. After his service was completed Ed & Mary moved to Wichita, KS, where he was the owner of Ed's Conoco and Ed's Western Truck & Auto. Ed and Mary raised four children Judy, Joan, Greg, and Gary. He retired from Beech Aircraft Fuel & Line in Wichita, KS where he lived until his death in 2006 at the age of 85. He was survived by his wife Mary who passed away in 2012. Ed and Mary were wonderful grandparents to 8 grandchildren, 11 great-great-grandchildren with numerous nieces and nephews. He was a kind and proud WWII Veteran, father, and business man. Ed and Mary left behind many fond memories. Banner sponsored by Mike Davis

Gaylord West: Gaylord joined the Marine Corps on February 4,1957. He was stationed in the Philippians and received two good conduct medals and an honorable discharge. He worked on duty in the jungle surrounding his base. He confronted a Huk rebel and his quick reaction saved him from being killed. He never told what happened to the Huk rebel. He became a Private 1st Class for the first time September 1st, 1957. He was demoted shortly after. This pattern continued throughout his enlistment, promoted, demoted.

The natives would sell meat on a stick and you never knew what you would be eating; dog, cat, monkey, lizard, etc. Gaylord tried it all. Another time in a bar, while everyone was having a beer a giant cane spider crawled up the bar and walked across it. One of the men pulled out his gun and shot it! Gaylord was transferred to Hawaii and was there when Hawaii became a state. He continued being himself and went skinny-dipping with his buddies at Sacred Falls. He was also in a bar known for it's décor of many exotic caged birds. Someone in his group released the birds and the group were kicked out of the bar and banned! He lived and enjoyed life to the fullest. Banner sponsored by Nina West.

James F Whitaker: Army, Vietnam, SIG BN, Spec 4 VSM VCM/60

James W White: Spec. 4 James W. White ("Whitey") joined the reserves in January of 1964. He was a member of the 1011th S&S Army Company. He was sent to basic training in June of '67, completing it in October at Fort Lee, Virginia. His company was called up in the spring of 1968 and was sent to Fort Benning , Georgia, shipping out to Vietnam in September. The 1011th Service and Supply Co. were assigned to a place called Bearcat near Saigon. While it was a trying and fearful time, Jim had the advantage of serving with fellow Kansans, many of whom he had known for years.

One day, Jim had just finished guard duty. He spoke to the soldiers (Mike Hubert and Sammy Kinnamon) who took his place. He walked to the mess hall for coffee. As soon as he entered the hall a rocket hit the jeep with Mike and Sammy in it. Mike was killed instantly and Sammy died two days later, never seeing his newborn daughter. Jim and his company returned to the U.S. in July of 1969. Jim was able to see his newborn son, Brian, who was born in March of '69.

Brigadier General Arthur Hurow reported upon Jim's return, "As Supply Handler with the 1011th Supply and Service Co., he displayed a keen and professional insight far beyond that expected of a man of his grade and experience. Through his energetic and diligent actions, he obtained superb results and earned for himself the respect and admiration of all of his associates. He performed his duties in a manner which reflects great credit upon himself, his unit, and the United States Army."

Jim and his wife, Mary Clare, settled in the North Lyon County area. They raised 3 children who all graduated from Northern Heights. He worked for BNSF Railroad for nearly 40 years in Emporia, retiring in 2004. Banner sponsored by wife, Mary Clare, and children, Brian and Amy White and family, Scott and Jodi White and family, and Joe and Megan Gasper and family.

Steve White: Steve entered the Navy in 1970 after having completed four years of ROTC at Dartmouth College, Hanover, NH. He received his first choice of duty– Basic Underwater Demolition/ SEAL training-from which he graduated in December, 1970. After completing Army parachuting training and Navy Underwater Swimmer School, he was assigned to Underwater Demolition Team-21 in Little Creek, VA. (In 1982, UDT-21 was designated as a Navy Seal Team). Steve served with the UDT-21 for four years. He trained with swimmer delivery vehicles, was a platoon commander, and after three years, was promoted to Operations Officer of the Team. While a platoon commander, he deployed to northern Europe and to the Caribbean Amphibious Ready Group. After leaving active duty in 1974, Steve affiliated with a reserve UDT/SEAL team based in Coronado, California. When he moved to Anchorage, Alaska, in 1977, he continued his service in the reserves by performing as the Officer in Charge of a Naval Combat Construction Detachment ("Seabees"). Steve completed his military service in 1979. Steve is the son-in-law of Evora Wheeler and is married to Barbara Wheeler who graduated from Emporia High School in 1969. Banner sponsored by Evora Wheeler and Family.

Donovan Wiggers: World War II 1943-1946, Navy-Fireman First Class Ships: U.S.S. R.E. COONTZ (AP-122), U.S.S. WELLES (DD-628), U.S.S. HELM (DD-388), U.S.S. DALY (DD-519) Locations: Pearl Harbor, Ulithi, Leyte, Saipan, Okinawa, Iwo Jima, Chichi Jima, Naha Jima, Sasebo, Yokosuka, Yokohama, Tokyo, Nagasaki, Wakayama A passage from Donovan's scrapbook: "I received my call to the Naval Air Corps V-5 Nov. 19, 1943. I had joined last June and had been working at the Smoky Hill Air Base, Salina, KS., while waiting for my call to duty. I quit my job the following day. Monday, Nov. 22, I left Salina on the Union Pacific at 4:30 p.m. bound for Kansas City, Missouri where my orders were to report the following morning at 9:00 a.m. Dad & Mother had wired the Pickwick Hotel for reservations the day my orders came because of crowded conditions everywhere--so on arriving I went to the hotel and had a good night's rest and wondering where I would be sent the following day. They told us that morning and I sent a telegram home to tell my parents that I would be stationed at Hutchinson, Kansas. Such good news. We ate supper at Union Station and left that night."

How the Navy made a marriage-told by Lois Pratt Wiggers (wife): "We met in May of 1945, through a letter. My cousin, Cecil Sparks, was on the USS Helm DD388 that Donovan was on during World War II. Cecil asked him if he would like to write to his cousin in Arkansas City, Kansas. Cecil showed Don a picture of me when I was 12, so Don thought I was a child, and he said yes he would like to write to me. The first letter I got from Don was very nice, and he sent me a picture of him in his navy uniform. I answered his letter right away, and sent him a current photo of me. He wrote a different letter back to me, telling me he thought I was younger than I was. We corresponded regularly for a year. Then in April of 1946, I received a letter from him saying he was being discharged in Norman, Oklahoma the last of May, and would like to come to my graduation from High School. Don came to see me every other weekend until December. He asked me to marry him and I said YES! We were married on September 21, 1947 with Cecil as our Best Man."

Donovan and Lois were married for almost forty-two years until Donovan's death in 1989. They have three daughters, Sharon Huggard, Nancy Boling, and Judy Edie. Seven grandchildren and ten great-grandchildren (so far). Donovan was a happy and fun-loving man. He played the clarinet, loved big band music, dancing, playing cards, RVing. He was the Night Train Yard Foreman for the Santa Fe Railroad. He was a member of the Sunbeam Car Club, Lowry-Funston Post 1980 of the VFW, and Ball-McColm Post 5 of the American Legion. Banner sponsored by Judy Edie.

Donald Lewis Williams~ In 1949, Donald Lewis Williams enlisted in the Kansas Army National Guard. He grew up in a family where his father, Edwin Lewis Williams served in the Philippines during the Filipino Insurrection and his brother, John Morton Williams trained bomber pilots during WWII. Every Monday night the unit met in the old building on the corner of 6th and Merchant. The group moved to the basement of the Civic auditorium until the new Armory was finished in 1953. He advanced from Pvt to Sgt in 6 months, during which time he met his future wife, Nancie Jane Karolik, daughter of James Victor Karolik who was the plant manager of the Globe Union Battery Plant. Nancie helped him get his first job at Globe Union. Because of Globe Union's nepotism policy, he was let go the day they married and he had to find employment elsewhere. Kenny Thomas, owner of Thomas Transfer and Storage, was a close friend of James. James asked Kenny if there might be a position for Donald, which there was. Years went by and the couple had 4 children: 3 boys and 1 girl.

In 1964, he moved to Fort Belvoir, Virginia to take the Engineer Officer Career Course. Wanting his family with him, he moved everyone to Virginia for 9 months. When the course ended they moved back to Emporia. After several years he advanced to Captain and became company commander for the Emporia National Guard unit, 169th Engineer's Company. In 1968, the unit was notified that they were to be called up to serve in Vietnam. Fort Carson, Colorado was the company's destination to train and prepare for Vietnam. While serving in Vietnam he was wounded by a grenade which exploded outside the window of his quarters throwing shrapnel straight into the artery of his right arm. Bleeding profusely, he tried and tried to open the blood covered doorknob to no avail. His hand kept slipping but finally after several failed attempts, his fellow officers broke the door down and rushed him to the infirmary. He spent a week recuperating in the hospital and then was flown to Hawaii for a week of R & R with Nancie. Immediately after, he was sent back to duty in Vietnam. In 1970, he came home to Emporia and went back to work at Thomas Transfer and Storage and has worked there ever since. He retired as a Major in 1979. Today he is Commander of Post 5 of the American Legion in Emporia, and still the legacy lives on, as all three sons enlisted in the Kansas Army National Guard. Ronald Lewis Williams retired as a SGT E5 in July of 2009 after serving 32 years. He was deployed to Kosovo in 2005. In 2008, he was sent to Louisiana to assist during Hurricane Gustav. Robert James Williams served his initial six years. Steven Luther Williams retired from the Kansas Air National Guard with a rank of MSGT in October of 2013 after 30 years of service. From May to September of 2007, he was deployed to Baghdad, Iraq as a 1st Sgt, and from January to May of 2008 he was deployed to Kuwait as a Flight Chief. Banner donated by his children and grandchildren.

Carl Wilson Sr: Army, Corporal, 135th Division, 4 Years. Banner sponsored by Mike Davis and Family.

Ellis Wise: My Dad was from Conway Springs Kansas—which was evidently a good place to live when you are a young boy. He was involved in all the typical activities most kids play in rural America. He thought he might become a postman, like his dad, and then came WWII.

My dad enlisted and went to boot camp—I think in Arkansas. He eventually was deployed to Europe. Being an educated man he served as a map reader and reconnaissance sergeant under Patton's command. In June 1944, my Dad was a member of the invasion force marking D-Day. A violent storm over the English Channel forced the invasion to be postponed a day. The weather prevented the Army from landing and most of the men suffered severe sea sickness. He told me that many felt that death in combat would have been far superior to death by sea sickness. On June 6th, when the weather cleared the Normandy Invasion was launched. My dad was one of lucky ones who lived through the invasion.

In December of 1944 my dad was in the Battle of the Bulge. He was wounded when his column of tanks encountered a column of Tigers. He then returned to the states to recover. After recovering from his wounds he returned to the war to be part of a top secret mission for Patton.

During this mission he served as a map reader for the Captain Abraham Baum, whom General Patton had put in charge of the rescue mission, later to become known as "Operation Hammelburg." The goal of the mission was to rescue Patton's son-in-law who was being held as a POW behind enemy lines. In late March of 1945, the rescue force of 314, went 60-80 miles into German Territory and freed a group of American POWs.
The rescue itself was successful as Patton's son-in-law was set free—even though he was later wounded and recaptured. This top secret mission was Patton's only failed mission.

The majority of the men making up the top secret mission failed to escape from Germany and were captured near Hammelburg. Twenty six of the rescuers were killed. During the time he was a POW, conditions were horrendous. I will never forget my Dad telling me about eating bugs and worms and rotten potatoes and being glad to get that! He said he lost 60 pounds in 30 days during that ordeal. He survived being a POW, but was wounded when the POW trains, where they were housed, were shelled during a US Air strike. The POW's were ultimately liberated by the 14th Armored Division in late April 1945.

My dad came home from the war to recover and then attended Kansas State University where he earned a degree in Poultry Science. He met my mom Ruth Peddicord while at Kansas State. They married and eventually came to Emporia—where he became a pretty well-known and well respected poultry man.

He was a proud American and loved his country. He had tremendous respect for General Patton. My dad would never go outside on the 4th of July—the sound of fireworks never failed to bring back the sounds of the war. He hated the war—but realized that serving made him the man that he was. Banner sponsored by Dr. Trish Dorsey

George Kwasniewski Witt: Tech Sergeant George J. "Kwasniewski" Witt. Born Feb. 20, 1924. Served Feb. 27, 1943 - Oct. 28, 1945 in the US Army Air Corps, WWII. George served as Radio Operator, Mechanic, and Gunner on the "Nine-O-Nine" B 17 Flying Fortress. He flew 21 missions in the European Theatre Operations and received his American Theatre Ribbon, EAME Ribbon, Good Conduct Ribbon, and Air Medal.

On the bombing missions, it was his responsibility to report "Bombay Clear" when the bombs had cleared the bay. On one of his missions, a bomb had hung up on a wire and was dangling from the bombay. George took quick action. He left his oxygen in the Radio Room, suspended himself over the open bay, and kicked the bomb free. When the "Bombay Clear" hadn't been given, the Engineer came to check. He gave his oxygen to George, helped him out of the bombay area, and everyone went back to their posts. George commented, "It was something you just do. You had no choice." On his 21st mission to Castle Germany, the Nine-O-Nine encountered a great deal of flak. They lost one of the 4 engines and slowed considerably. Escort planes, B51's, helped keep them protected. After the mission was complete, the Nine-O-Nine lost a second engine. They continued to lose altitude until they successfully made it back to base on 2 engines. George said, "When I saw the White Cliffs of Dover I was the happiest person in the world." George's brother, Ed, was on leave waiting at George's base for his return from that mission. The other planes from his group had already come in and Ed feared the worst. When George radioed in that they were going to make it, it was a joyous relief. They had a happy reunion. In 1991, The Chicago Tribune reported that the Nine-O-Nine B 17 Airplane had been refurbished and would be on display at Meigs Field. George took his personal Missions Log and a photo album and visited his old plane. The exhibit welcomed him and the Tribune featured him in an article about his time on the Nine-O-Nine. George passed away August, 25, 2014.Banner sponsored by Jim and Kim Witt and Family

Richard Wright: Richard W. Wright was born in Emporia, Kansas on July 2, 1928 and originally lived on Logan Avenue South-East of town. Dad was a life-long Emporia resident continuing in the tradition of many ancestors who have lived in this area – one of whom was Reverend Henry Wright. Dad grew up with his mother, Helen (Wilhite) Wright, who was the probate court clerk under Judge William Dick for many years – and his grandmother Susan (Evans) Wilhite. Dad served in the Army during the Korean conflict and was stationed in Alaska. Being an only child, it was difficult for his mother and grandmother to have him go away to serve, but they were so proud that he did. Dad regularly sent money home from Alaska to support his Mother and Grandmother.

Dad married Betty Lou Christensen in McPherson, Kansas in 1956 and they have five children – Jayne (a CPA in Phoenix, Arizona), Todd (a CPA with Nonprofit Solutions, Inc. in Emporia), David (a CPA with the IRS in Wichita), Joe (a construction company owner in Emporia) and Tim (a CPA firm owner in Emporia). Mom and Dad have 10 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren. Dad graduated from KSTC (now ESU) with a Bachelor's degree in Chemistry – and worked as a chemist at the local Bunge Soybean Plant for 39 years.

Dad was a dedicated family man, Cub Scout Master, church volunteer and served in the community. We lost Dad in 2003, but his memory lives on in the love and wisdom he passed down to us.
Dad – we are honored that you served our country and protected our freedom. We thank you for your service Dad!
Banner sponsored by Tim Wright

Bill Wygle: In the fall of 1944, R. W."Bill" Wygle was playing football for the Kansas Jayhawks when his selective service lottery number came up as soon as he turned 18 in November. He was inducted into the US Army on December 13,1944 at Ft. Leavenworth, Kansas. He served on Leyte, Luzon, Manilla, Samar all in the Philippines. Later, he was stationed on the island of Guam. He was delayed going to Guam for helping out a "friend". Being a big strong football player, Bill was asked by a pal to help move some kitchen equipment from the base to an off base site. He didn't ask many questions and the guy told him it all had to be repaired. The next day, his Sergeant asked him where everything went and of course Bill told him exactly where everything went! Turns out, all the kitchen equipment was stolen! Bill didn't get in trouble as he has told the officers where everything was and his side of the story. But he was delayed because he had to stay back and testify against the "pal" that asked him to move everything in the first place. Bill was a driver of an amphibious truck. His job was to pick up and drop off supplies from all the small islands in the Philippines. He was always glad all he had to pick up were supplies, another driver, driving the same equipment was picking up bodies of the soldiers who had died in battle. Bill was very proud of serving and even took the Honor Flight to the WWII Memorial to pay his respects and share memories. PFC. Wygle came home September 11th, 1946, to Oakland California and on October 31,1946 ,he was discharged. Banner sponsored by Janice Jaggard, Debby and Bill Brooks, Becky and Smitty Smith.

Calvin Yeager: Specialist 1st Class Calvin L Yeager who was born and raised in Emporia, was drafted on May 22, 1967 to serve in Vietnam. While serving his duty he did maintenance on the heavy equipment. He was honorably discharge in 1973. Currently resides in Neosho Rapids with his wife Patricia (Colglaizer). He is a Dad, Grandfather, most of all our Hero! Banner sponsored by Deidra and Matt Baumwart