

# Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution



## Patriot of the Month

November 2014



**Rich Richards**

*Sponsored by:*

**Mary Hempstead Lisa Chapter**



Commander Rich Richards, U.S. Navy, retired, enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in 1957, received his associate degree from the University of Minnesota in 1964 and entered flight training in April 1965 as a Naval Aviation Cadet. He was commissioned an Ensign and received Flight Officer wings in May 1966.

Rich initially reported to VW-1 at Agana, Guam, and then to VW-1 Detachment MCAS, Chu Lai, Vietnam, where he flew 64 night reconnaissance missions in support of carrier air strikes against North Vietnam. He reported to the famous Navy Hurricane Hunter Squadron (VW-4) in August 1968 at Jacksonville, Florida, and Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico, where he accumulated over 100 actual hurricane/typhoon eye penetrations in the WC-121 aircraft. Additionally, he participated in the flight test program for a hurricane hunter replacement aircraft. In January 1970, he reported to the Naval Post Graduate School at Monterey, California, where he received a Bachelor's degree in International Relations in December 1971. His next assignment was Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron FOUR (VQ-4) at NAS Patuxent River, Maryland, where he served as Safety Officer, Administrative, Officer, and EC-130 navigator instructor. In 1975, he joined the staff of Commander Naval Air Forces Pacific in San Diego. He then joined Fleet Composite Squadron THREE (VC-3) as Maintenance Officer and flight navigator aboard the DE-130 aircraft until 1978.

Commander Richards next joined the "Firebirds" of the Tactical Electronic Warfare Squadron THREE THREE (VAQ-33) in Key West, Florida, where he transitioned to the EA-4F Skyhawk threat simulation aircraft and served as Assistant Maintenance Officer and later as Maintenance Officer. He reported from that billet in July 1980 to the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island. After graduation from Senior Officers Course, he was reassigned as a faculty member to the Center for War Gaming as an Air Warfare Umpire and Project Officer for CINCLANTFLT war games. In 1983, he was detailed to Central America and served on the CINCLANTFLT Detachment in Balboa, Panama. During this assignment he liaised with battle staffs aboard USS RANGER, USS CORAL SEA, and USS NEW JERSEY and served as the Navy political-military escort officer for Central American dignitaries. He reported to VC-6 as Executive Officer in January 1984. Rich has flown over 5,000 hours in numerous aircraft, including the EC-121, EC-130, ERA-3, EA-4, and EF-4 Phantom II supersonic aircraft. His decorations include three Air Medals (Strike/Flight) and numerous unit and Vietnam service decorations.

Rich and his wife, Linda who is a registered nurse, have two children, and three grandchildren. Upon retirement, Rich and Linda owned the Flying Cloud Balloon Company. They enjoy traveling, and Linda makes award winning chili.

The Mary Hempstead Lisa Chapter DAR is proud to honor Rich Richards as Patriot of the Month and extend their gratitude for his service to our nation.