

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution  
Proudly Honors

Patriot of the Month



December 2017



John "Jack" Poitras

United States Army

Sponsored by:  
Valley of the Meramec  
Chapter

Jack joined the United States Army in August, 1967. He went to basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. He spent nine weeks in advanced training at Fort Eustis Virginia. He was then sent to an airfield, IV Corps, in Can Tho South Vietnam. This was located 100 miles south of Saigon.

Jack received the National Defense Medal; Vietnam Service Medal; Vietnam Campaign Medal w/7 Bronze Stars; Army Commendation Medal (2 Awards); Good Conduct; Unit Citation and Expert Rifle. He also received a Vietnam Gallantry Cross which was presented to him by the Government of Vietnam. He received the Drill Instructor Shield.

The most memorable experience for Jack, when he had free time, was to take care of the newborn babies thru adult children of American GI's. The Vietnam government and the United States government did not want these children. The children stayed in orphanages run by nuns. GI's would play with the children, build them beds, give them care packages, etc. The GI's were told not to be there, until one day, Time Magazine showed up, brought attention to the orphanage and then they were allowed to take care of the children.

In January 1969, Jack was wounded. He was attempting to take a fixed wing twin engine double prop airplane on a pre-test flight, after it had been repaired. Suddenly a helicopter next to him blew



up, he cut the fuel to his plane and tried to get out, but fell, and then another helicopter blew up. He was hit by shrapnel. He crawled pulling his crew chief to a ditch; the heat was unbearable, with the magnesium burning from the plane. Having had protective clothing on, this lessened the severity of the burns. He was taken to a hospital, soon to return to his unit.

In his civilian life, Jack worked for a Ship Building Company as a fitter for 14 years. He later had a cabinet business for 35 years.

He is a member of many organizations, to mention a few, American Legion; Life Member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW); Life Member of the Disabled Vietnam Veterans Association; and Board Member of the Prisoner of War-Missing in Action Museum as a Representative of the VFW. He volunteers at the Jefferson Barracks Veterans Administration facility. He has been a bugler for 49 years playing at the National Cemetery in Jefferson Barracks. He was elected as Veteran of the Year at Scott Air Force Base in Belleville, Illinois, in 2017.

Jack has been married for 37 years to his wife Mary. Pictured with Jack, is his Service Dog Bliss.

Valley of the Meramec Daughters are very honored and proud to recognize John "Jack" Poitras as Patriot of the Month for his dedication, patriotism, and service to our great nation.