

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution



Proudly Honors
Patriot of the Month
September 2021

Joe Darrell Lovelace

United States Army



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Ozark Spring
Chapter

Joe Lovelace entered the US Army in 1966, receiving his basic training at Fort Leonard Wood and advanced infantry training at Fort Ord. Upon completion of his advanced training, he was sent to Fort Benning, Georgia, to receive additional training as a scout dog handler.

Joe chose a German Shepherd, Buck, as his scout dog, and they quickly bonded as they moved through training together. Scout dogs were trained to alert by smelling the wind, picking up the scent of harm and credited with saving thousands of lives during the Vietnam War.

Upon graduation from dog handler training, Joe and Buck were sent to Vietnam where they were in the 50th Scout Dog Platoon of the 4th Infantry Division. Their base camp was at Pleiku, and from there they would go out on patrol.

Joe participated in what later became known as the nine days in May. He and Buck were walking point, searching for the enemy, when Buck alerted. As a result, four of the enemy were killed, and as Joe says, "That started it." Articles written regarding these nine days in May state that this battle between the American and the North Vietnamese forces was one of the largest and most savage actions seen by the 4th Infantry Division.

Once, Joe told his company commander that Buck had found something. Joe states, "They found rice, they found arms, they found everything." Whenever Buck alerted, everyone paid attention.

His saddest moment was to have to leave Buck behind when he returned home, as at that time they were not allowed to bring their dog home with them. Buck later died of what Joe describes as red tongue disease. Joe received the Combat Infantry Badge, the Army Commendation Medal with "V" Device for heroism, Vietnam Service & Campaign Medal, and the Good Conduct Medal.

Joe and his wife, Vicky, have three children, two girls and a boy.

Ozark Spring Daughters are proud to honor and recognize Joe Darrell Lovelace as Patriot of the Month for his very patriotic and dedicated service to our great nation.

