

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution

Proudly Honors

Patriot of the Month

July 2022



Stephen W. Hyatt

United States Air Force
United States Air Force Reserve

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Saint Charles
Chapter



Stephen W. Hyatt's military story starts when he was a junior in Tahoka High School. His mother was an elementary school teacher and when Stephen was 5 years old his mother and dad divorced so they ended up moving in with his grandparents. When Stephen was a junior in HS, and the various military service recruiters came to THS to sign up seniors, his mother did her thing and spoke to the U.S. Navy recruiter where they agreed for "them" to drive north to Lubbock, Texas where the recruiting station was located and get him signed up.

Still not 18 and in his senior year, Stephen and his mother drove to Lubbock to the recruiter station where there were offices for all military service recruiters, Army, Navy, Air Force, and Marines. Stephen thought it interesting when they arrived and got out of the cars where all the recruiters came to their doors thinking we were coming to "their" door, and they ended up in the Navy recruiter's office. Stephen said, "Of course, I wasn't interested in the details, so I stepped outside the Navy office and got snagged by the Air Force recruiter. Then my mother followed, and she ended up signing for me to enter the delayed enlistment program with the U.S. Air Force where I would leave for basic training upon my graduation in May 1974."

Stephen attended basic training in San Antonio Texas. After basic training he was assigned based on his testing results to attend technical school at Chanute AFB which was in Champaign-Urbana, Rantoul Illinois. He completed technical school to be an aircraft mechanic; more specifically, he became a "jet over 2" Aircraft Maintenance Technician for cargo aircraft in the U.S. Air Force. His technical school ended up with him trained and certified on a gutted (empty, no engines, no instruments, nothing worked) B-52E model bomber. Completing technical school, his first assignment as "permanent party" was to Charleston AFB, South Carolina. Stephen went home on leave and after 15 days, he reported for duty at 437 OMS Squadron, Charleston AFB, South Carolina where he went to work in the non-powered, aerospace ground equipment (NP-AGE) section working on aircraft maintenance stands and other pieces of aircraft support equipment as a 3-level technician.

Within one year of his time to re-enlist, the Air Force introduced an "early-out" program where he could apply and get out by Christmas 1977; short of his four-year commitment. Stephen applied and was approved. He was released and was home before Christmas 1977. Stephen then entered college

at Texas Tech University and applied for U.S. Air Force Civilian Service. While in college, he accepted a position at Reese AFB, Lubbock Texas as Warehouse Worker. Stephen worked there and attended college for 3 years. At the end of the three years, he decided to re-enlist into the Air Force, only this time he reported for duty at 443 OMS Squadron, Altus AFB, Oklahoma. As Stephen gained his next skill level at Charleston, he was considered a trained, 5-level technician and was assigned to start working directly on aircraft there at Altus, the C-141A Cargo jet . One and one-half years later, he applied for a “swap” with another member and returned to Charleston AFB, South Carolina.



Back at Charleston, the Air Force had purchased a new cargo aircraft which had been manufactured by Boeing; the C-17A and Stephen was in the bed-down office where they were an active part of Boeing’s building the C-17A and preparing for its delivery to Charleston AFB. Charleston AFB was the home of the C-141B aircraft also when the first C-17A aircraft was delivered. Stephen was at Charleston when Desert Storm started, and Charleston released a single 30-ship mission in support of Desert Storm. He said, it was such an awesome event to watch 30 C-141B aircraft depart Charleston AFB for Desert Storm, one right after the other.

In 1992, the Department of Defense released a report which allowed him to take voluntary separation and exit active duty and step into the USAF Reserves (USAFR). He applied, was accepted. Stephen departed Charleston AFB for a contractor position at Tinker AFB, Oklahoma as a computer programmer. He also immediately transitioned into the USAFR.

Stephen stayed in the USAFR until age 60. He honorably retired at age 60 from the U.S. Air Force.

Saint Charles Chapter Daughters are extremely proud to recognize and honor Stephen W. Hyatt as our Patriot of the Month for his dedication, patriotism, and service to our great country.