

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution

Proudly Honors

Patriot of the Month

December 2022



Wayne E. Walther

United States Air Force

Sponsored by:

Louisiana Purchase Chapter, NSDAR

Wayne Edward Walther, born in Harrison County, Indiana, enlisted in the Air Force Reserve on July 25, 1953, at the age of seventeen years old. This farm boy had basic training at Bakalar Air Force Base in Columbus, Indiana. Established in 1942, the airfield served as a training base for medium range C-46 Commando and C-47 Skytrain troop carrier planes and glider pilots. This base was closed in 1970 and the present-day facility operates as the Columbus Municipal Airport.



Wayne went to Greenville, South Carolina a weekend each month for training to drop heavy equipment with the Aerial port squadron. He said they flew down in a C 46 taking eight hours to fly from Columbus Indiana to San Antonio.

On April 3, 1957, Wayne and his buddy enlisted in the regular Air Force. There was a mix-up on his paperwork, and he was assigned to basic training again. After 3 weeks, they straightened out the paperwork and he was assigned to the regular re-enlisted squadron in San Antonio. Once that was completed, he went to Scott Air Force Base, Illinois for 28 weeks of Airborne Radio School.

His next assignment was at McConnell Air Force Base in Wichita Kansas. Wayne worked on aircraft radios. They had to be checked carefully because at this time radio was a means of communication for lifting and landing the planes. One time Wayne was working on the radio and the pilot started the plane as to depart. Wayne was in the back end working on the system. The pilot didn't know he was still in the back end of the plane. Wayne quickly cut the antenna to the tower and the pilot didn't get the approval to depart.

Wayne was honorably discharged from McConnell Air Force Base on July 25, 1958. Because of his Air Force training in Electronics, he had the following jobs: McDonnell Aircraft Corporation, Emerson Electric, Benjamin Air Rifles, Midwest Rubber, Journeyman carpenter, Self-employed carpenter and back to McDonnells (Boeing) for 17 years where he retired.

Wayne's humble character reiterated, "If you hear someone bragging, the guy that brags hasn't seen anything. It is the one that is silent that has seen it all." With that, he proudly told me of someone that he admired as a soldier and veteran. His old neighbor and friend, Lt. Donald Dreifke, decorated World War II Air Force fighter pilot and POW Survivor of German prisoner of war camps. He parachuted from a disabled plane into enemy territory during the heat of battle. And wasted away in a POW camp, until Hitler committed suicide in April of 1945 and General Patton came in with big convoys and took the prisoners home.

After retirement, Wayne volunteered at Jefferson Memorial Hospital for seventeen years. Presently married to Edna Mae Walther, they delivered Meals on Wheels to the needy until Covid stopped the deliveries.

The Louisiana Purchase Chapter NSDAR is proud to nominate Wayne Edward Walther as Patriot of the Month and thank him for his service and commitment to our country.