

# Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution

Proudly Honors

Patriot of the Month

May 2023



## William A. Striler

### United States Navy

Sponsored by:

Louisiana Purchase Chapter, NSDAR

William Alfred Striler enlisted in the U.S. Navy following graduation from Crystal City High School in 1957. He and four friends on a whim went to the Navy Recruit Center and all enlisted under the Buddy Plan that same day. The Navy Buddy Plan guarantees the recruits will attend basic and advance training together and then be assigned together to their first duty station. Imagine his mother's surprise when Bill came home and said he was leaving for the U.S. Navy in two weeks.



One of his friends was so nervous during the initial medical checkup that he was detained because of his high blood pressure. Bill was sent to Great Lakes, Illinois for ten weeks of basic training. His friends were not sent with him. In fact, the entire time they were in the Navy, the friends were never stationed together. As he said, "So much for the Buddy Plan."

Completing his basic training at Great Lakes, Illinois, he was assigned to Chicago, Illinois for training as a Corpsman. In the Navy, a Corpsman is like a nurse crossed with an EMT. After completing training in all facets of the medical world, he was sent to the Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland for 1 ½ years. As a corpsman, he kept the servicemen and women healthy by assisting in a wide range of departments and procedures. He dispensed vaccines and analyzed lab samples. He worked in the Navy Hospital and orthopedic and operating room floors.

From there he was assigned to the Dispensary at the Naval Hospital and issued medicine to the military, and their families, including Army, Navy, and Marines.

Four years later as a Corpsman in Maryland, Bill was honorably discharged from the U.S. Navy. When he returned to Crystal City, he remarked, "All my friends were gone. It wasn't the same." Therefore, he decided to go back to Maryland.

He had various jobs including IBM, and waiter at Watergate Hotel in Washington, D.C. At that time, Watergate was considered one of Washington's most desirable living spaces, popular with members of

Congress and political figures. But his love for people and the medical world led him to nursing homes and hospitals.

In 1989, after several years working in a nursing home in a poverty-stricken area in Southeast Louisiana, he returned to Hagerstown, Maryland. Bill and Dr. Marty Gallagher proposed that they help the Community using their medical skills. Talking to various organizations to present their plan, they had an offer from the Rescue Mission which gave them the building, which included 2 exam rooms and a waiting room. Surprisingly, they received a very good response from the Department of Social Services, Community Action Council, and the Rescue Mission.

On February 13, 1980, the Hagerstown Rescue Mission Clinic was opened with 6 people volunteering on staff including Doctors, Nurses, Psychiatrists, Gynecologist, and lay people to help in registration and record keeping. It developed into 30-40 people volunteering.

Although Bill has retired, the Clinic continues to grow and help many people. On May 29, 1993, the governor of Maryland, Wm. Donald Schaefer presented Bill and Dr. Marty Gallagher with an award for outstanding health care in the state of Maryland. The idea of the clinic has permeated to other states.

Bill's entire career has been helping people in need. Working at the Veterans Hospital in Maryland for many years, he obtained his BSN Nursing Degree in May 2003. Joining the US Navy was a wise decision for Bill as he reaped the benefits of his training as a Navy Corpsman to make a difference in our world.

The Daughters of the Louisiana Purchase Chapter NSDAR are proud to nominate Corpsman William Alfred Striler as Patriot of the Month and extend their gratitude for his patriotic service and commitment to our great nation.