

# Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution

## Proudly Honors

### Patriot of the Month

June 2023



## Douglas Pence

### United States Army

Sponsored by:  
Ozark Spring Chapter, NSDAR



Douglas Pence enlisted in the Army at 17 in 1969 during the Vietnam War.

He took his basic training at Ft. Campbell, KY. He then went to Ft. Lee, VA for his training as a Combat Armorer, which was followed by Parachute Training School at Ft. Benning, GA. At his first duty station he was assigned to the 82nd Airborne Brigade in the 325th Infantry Bravo Company at Ft. Bragg, NC. He was in charge of the Arms Room. While at Ft. Bragg his company went TDY to West Point, NY and he taught pistol, M-16 and hand-to-hand training to the cadets. On his 12th jump he had a bad parachute accident and fell 60 feet.

At age 18 he was sent to Vietnam. He was assigned to the 173rd Airborne Brigade 2/503 Alpha company. The 173rd is an elite specialized unit. During WWII the 173rd was comprised of the 10th Special Forces Group of the Green Berets and the Army Rangers. Its primary mission was to strategically deploy, conduct forcible entry parachute assaults, and secure key objectives for follow-on military operations. The 173rd was involved in some of the most brutal fighting in the Vietnam War.

Doug was assigned to Camp Radcliff in An Khe and Bien Hoa, then later to Camp English in Phu Bi. The team he worked in was a 7–12 man team which conducted ambushes, prisoner snatch and grab, raids and rescue operations. They would also assist other teams or units if they needed extra personnel. His unit conducted long-range reconnaissance patrols (LRRPs) and fought against the 95th Division of the (PARV/VC) Peoples Army of the Republic of Vietnam and Viet Cong.

Part of his training was to go through the 173rd Jungle School for three weeks. He learned how to recognize signs for booby-traps, how to walk point and slack and basically stay alive. Missions were supposed to be three days out and three days back in camp but invariably lasted longer. Due to the opposition to the Vietnam War in the United States and the Nixon pull-back, the men didn't always get the supplies they needed when on reconnaissance. When the brigade returned to the United States, as a Nixon pull-back, his brigade was sent to Fort Campbell, KY and was reassigned to the 101st Airborne Division.

Doug was wounded in battle, carries shrapnel in a lung, and contracted all three kinds of malaria in Vietnam. Upon his return to the United States, the malaria worsened. He was sent to Ft. Ord, CA

for treatment. He received a Medical Discharge in 1971 at Ft. Ord due to his wounds and diseases. He attained the rank of E-5.

He has been married to Diane for over 50 years and they have three sons. In civilian life he was a Director of Facilities Management at three hospitals, Carthage College, and the First Wisconsin Center in Milwaukee, WI.

His medals include National Defense, Good Conduct, Bronze Star, Combat Infantry Badge, Parachute Badge, Vietnam Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Gallantry Cross, Civil Action Honor Medal 1/C & 2/C, Army Presidential Unit Citation, Army Meritorious Citation, RVN Presidential Citation, Expert Marksman with auto rifle and pistol and Sharpshooter Badge with rifle.