

# Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution

Proudly Honors

Patriot of the Month

August 2023



## Karl Wendell

### United States Air Force

Sponsored by:  
Niangua Chapter, NSDAR

After Karl graduated from High School in rural Illinois, he held various jobs and even took a few college classes, but nothing seemed the right fit. Since his father and other relatives had served in the military, in 1975 Karl decided to enlist in the Air Force. Of the training choices available, operating room technician seemed the best choice, possibly because he had previously worked as a hospital orderly. After basic training at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas, he was sent to Shepherd Air Force Base in Texas for advanced training as an operating room technician. His first assignment was Minot Air Force Base in North Dakota. Because Karl was able to anticipate the needs of the surgeon, he not only assisted with general surgery, but also with Ear Nose and Throat, Obstetrics, Orthopedics, and Plastic surgeries. Another assignment was Blithville AF Base in Arkansas where he continued to serve as an operating room technician. He was transferred back to Shepherd Air Force Base in Texas where he taught at the School of Health Science, teaching enlisted men to be operating room technicians. That program had a 96% pass rate. The students entering the program were reading at an 8<sup>th</sup> grade level and the course was taught on an 14<sup>th</sup> grade level. Karl said the most rewarding thing about his military career was teaching others. After nine months of teaching, Karl was granted a medical discharge. He had served 11 years in the Air Force. Awards Karl received were two Air Force Commendations.



Karl said the most important thing he learned in the military was ‘Don’t burn your bridges’.

After his discharge, Karl earned a B.S. in Education and taught English and Physical Education in Wiesbaden, Germany. Moving to Florida, Karl earned a Masters of Science in Educational Leadership Degree. His career in education included being an assistant middle school principal, a high school principal, Director of Special Education and a teacher at a Magnet School. He developed a program for an Alternative School and served as its director for 4 years. When Karl retired from Education, he had spent twelve years in the classroom and fourteen years in Administration.

After leaving education, Karl served as the Assistant Chairman of a Food Bank in Florida.

Karl and his wife moved to central Missouri in 2021. He became a volunteer with the American Red Cross where he provides service to the Armed Forces including checking with families of new enlistees

to make sure they have contact information and providing follow-up calls when servicemen/women are granted emergency leave. He is certified to make presentations on International Humanitarian Law. Karl is active in the local American Legion Post and serves as the 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Commander.

Niangua Chapter is proud of Karl Wendell's military service and is pleased to nominate him as a Patriot of the Month.