

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution

Proudly Honors

Patriot of the Month

December 2023



Vince Luetkenhaus

United States Army

Sponsored by:
Saint Charles Chapter, NSDAR

Mr. Luetkenhaus was drafted into the United States Army on Nov. 26, 1963. He did his basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, MO. After basic training, he was sent to Fort Wadsworth, Staten Island, NY. He was assigned to the mess hall as a cook. Before entering the service, he was a meat cutter but there were no meat cutters at Fort Wadsworth. He was at this post from Feb. 15 thru the end of May, 1964 and thought that this was a great duty station.



At the end of May, he received orders to report to Camp Drum, NY, for temporary duty for three months. Camp Drum was located about thirty miles from the Canadian border. While on this temporary duty, he received orders to become a cook at headquarters company at Camp Drum. This was where he spent the rest of his enlistment. This was a disappointment to him as he planned to return to New York City. He was discharged from active duty on November 25, 1965.

Camp Drum was the post used by the First Army Division for their reservist summer camp duties. Groups of ten thousand would come for two weeks at a time for their training. He had not contact with these troops as he was with Headquarters Company which kept the place going year-round. They fed 125 men in the mess hall, year-round. Mr. Luetkenhaus said that winters there were cold as the temperature would go from 34 degrees to below zero, with a lot snow. Marines were sent there for their arctic training. While the Marines were there, he had the chance to fly with them on a training practice run in a double prop helicopter. He added that it was cold and snowy on the airfield.

When he left basic training and went to New York, that was the first time he was on an airplane. He said that flying into New York City at night was a site to behold. He really enjoyed Staten Island and was disappointed that he could not return to New York but he was able to stay in New York State and not go to Vietnam.

When he returned home after his discharge, he resumed his duties managing the meat department of his family business. As years went by, the family owned three IGA grocery stores, one which he managed. In 1994, the last store was sold and he retired.

Just before he was drafted, he met his wife, Sharon. They wrote back and forth for two years. He received two letters every week, one from his mother and the other from Sharon. Their relationship was through the mail. When he returned home in November 1965, they re-connected. They got engaged in January 1966 and were married September 24, 1966. They recently celebrated their 57th anniversary.