

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution

Proudly Honors

Patriot of the Month

May 2024



Ken Barger

United States Army

Sponsored by:

John Sappington Chapter, NSDAR

Ken Barger was drafted into the military in 1971. He served in the Army and was quickly sent to Vietnam. Ken was trained as a radio operator with an infantry battalion. He served on a fire base and on a relay site on a mountain outside of Xuan Loe Vietnam. In addition, he received a Bronze Star for the efforts that his team and he did to save the lives of a platoon of soldiers in the jungle that were being attacked by North Vietnamese forces by coordinating a helicopter pick up in the middle of the night.



Ken reported that the only interesting thing he saw during his time in the military, were the drugs that some of the men were using. He said he was only 20 years old. The advice he was given before going overseas was to stay away from drugs and out of trouble. At 20, he was obviously scared to death so he minded his own business and concentrated on what he was suppose to do on the job, and didn't ask many questions. He says that is kind of what he still does today. His wife shared that it was very different back in the 70's when he came home from Vietnam. "There was no reception or happy crowds when he came home. Just me. It was tough for those men."

Before going into the service, Ken had worked for National Supermarket. When he returned he was lucky enough to have a job waiting for him. He worked there for 27 years the spent some years at Dillard and Sears in management roles. After retirement he needed something to do so he reached out to the Red Cross because they had responded to a fire his son had in his apartment.

When he discovered that the Red Cross helps people in more ways than he ever imagined. So now he has been there for about 6 years helping them in their actions all over the country and overseas. Ken has been married to his wife Melissa for 45 years and says he could not accomplish many of the things he does without her support from helping me grow up when he came home to now when she helps him deploy out of town for the Red Cross. They have two children. Amanda and Cody, and three granddaughters Maggie, Molly and Kennedy and have a grandson on the way. He feels very blessed.