

# MISSOURI STATE SOCIETY DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION

*Proudly Honors*



**JERRY DAVIS**  
UNITED STATES ARMY  
SERGEANT (E-5),

**JUNE 18, 1968 – JANUARY 19, 1970**

**WOUNDED IN ACTION – APRIL 27, 1969**

*as*

**PURPLE HEART PATRIOT**

**AUGUST 2025**

*Honoring His Service and Sacrifice*

*Sponsored by: Dorcas Richardson Chapter, NSDAR*



Jerry Davis was born May 10, 1947, to Leon and Geraldine Davis. Jerry had two sisters (now deceased, grew up on a farm near Galt, Missouri. Jerry attended elementary school in Galt, Missouri, then came to Trenton, Missouri, after the fifth grade. Jerry graduated from Trenton High School in 1966.

Jerry had pre-enlisted in the Navy while still in High School, but because of plantar warts on his feet, he did not pass the physical and could not join the Navy as planned. Jerry then changed his life plans and began working at Muff's Bakery in Trenton, Missouri. Two years later, Jerry changed jobs and began working at Trenton Foods in Trenton, Missouri.

On June 18, 1968, Jerry was drafted into the U.S. Army. He had self-removed the plantar warts and passed the physical. At this time, Jerry stated, "I wish I had stayed in the Army". Boot Camp for Jerry was at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, for training. He received advanced infantry training at Fort Lewis in Washington. "When they exchanged our rifles for an M-16, we knew where we were going," Jerry stated, and so after an 18-hour plane ride, we landed at Ben Wa, Vietnam.

While stationed in Vietnam and Jerry was wounded twice during combat. The first time was when their patrol unknowingly walked into a mine field and found out when their sergeant had stepped on a mine. Jerry was closer by and tried to help the sergeant, and wound up with shrapnel fragments in the back of his jacket and a wound to his arm. He did not discover this until someone saw blood on his arm. He did not report the injury; "I just kept on going."

Weeks later, Jerry received an injury for which he received a Purple Heart Medal. On April 27, 1969, while in a night defensive position during his sleep, a mortar round hit their position. "The noise woke me up, and I said I had been hit. Those around me did not believe me, thinking that I was having a dream, but then I realized that I had been seriously injured. I was flown immediately to a hospital set up in a Quonset hut in Da Nang by helicopter. Jerry stated that the helicopter ride was really cold. I had eight pieces of shrapnel in my back near my spine. They took me immediately into surgery and removed the shrapnel. The surgeon brought me the pieces of shrapnel he removed from my back. It was at the hospital in Da Nang that an officer and his aide awarded me the Purple Heart. Jerry stated that the Quonset hut was dimly lit, and I was still under the effects of the anesthesia, so I didn't know who they were. Also, I heard gravel and rocks hit the side of the Quonset hut and was told it was from a mortar round landing nearby.

As soon as Jerry was stable, he was flown to the army hospital at Camp Zama, Japan, for further treatment and rehabilitation. His wounds were left open in the back with drains to drain infection and facilitate proper healing. Jerry was placed on a gurney and wheeled to the transport plane in DaNang, and just before he was to be wheeled on the plane, he heard a loud bang and was told that an adjoining airplane's tire had blown, and was immediately sedated and woke up in the hospital at Camp Zama,

Japan.

The hospital had four rows of beds placed head to head and one other single row. Next to Jerry was a man named Jerry Paulson, who, of course, became a good friend. Jerry explained that the hospital had been built during WW II and was built with short halls and 90-degree turns to blunt the effects of any blast that might occur in the hospital.

Once Jerry and other G.I. patients had healed enough to get around, they helped the nurses push medication carts, wheelchair patients, and anything else their healing wounds would allow. Jerry often pushed his friend around. One time to a movie, "we made quite a sight, he in a wheelchair and me all hunched over from injuries and surgery, trying to push him around. Because they were unable to get the shrapnel from the back, they had to go in from the front to remove some of the pieces. Jerry sustained seven stitches in his back, 18 stitches in his front, and two stitches in his side. Jerry still has two wire sutures in his front stomach area today.

Jerry related several other events that occurred while he was over there. One event was when he and Jerry P. were well enough to go "hunting burgers and fries" in Yokohama, Japan. They didn't find the burger and fries and decided to stay in town for the night. They found a hotel and went in to rent a room. At first, the clerk came into the office all excited to have two more guests for the night. When she saw they were two American G.I.s, her happy excitement changed to "go away, no G.I.s," and ran them off.

Because it was late, the train that brought them in was not running, and they were still not able to walk the distance to the base, so they had to rent a taxi to take them back to base at a considerable expense. Jerry said it was the first time he had ever been discriminated against for anything. They were told by base officers not to go to Tokyo because there were demonstrations against Americans.

Another part of Jerry's recuperation was P.T. (physical training and swimming) to regain strength. G.I.s developed major calluses on their feet from walking in the jungle. During the P.T. and swimming, the callouses began to slough off, and a special cream was needed to keep them from being painful.

At one point in the field, the patrol ran out of food. Jerry said some southern boys from Kentucky and Tennessee rustled up some chickens, cleaned them, and boiled them in helmets. The rest of us rustled up some rice and green bananas and put them with the chicken, which tasted pretty good to us at the time. Jerry also ran out of water and sated his thirst with some cucumbers he found.

After Jerry had recuperated, he was given a choice of returning to a new duty station, Vietnam or Korea. He chose to go to South Korea with his friend Jerry P. They arrived in South Korea on July 4, 1969, and, with all members of the group, were placed in a large hall to wait for assignments. While in the hall, they heard follies of gunfire and immediately panicked, not knowing what day it was and why the gunfire was. Officers in charge immediately announced to calm down, it was July Fourth, and that the gunfire was a 21-gun salute to memorialize the day. They were assigned to guard a missile base.

During the winter, it can get down to 25 degrees below 0. To keep our feet from freezing, we had to change socks frequently. Our feet would sweat and make the socks damp and wet, so we would have to change them. We hung them from our waist to dry, then put them back on in rotation. We also had to put the batteries from our radios in our jackets to keep them warm so they would work when we needed to communicate by radio.

Jerry also mentioned the "donut dollies." These were girls who distributed donuts to the G.I.s, along with a kind word and a smile.

There are other incidents Jerry related along with some of the struggles and nightmares he still has because of his deployment to Vietnam and infantry duty.

On January 19, 1970, Jerry returned home to his wife and family of two boys and one daughter. Thanks to the G.I. Bill, Jerry was able to attend Trenton Junior College (now North Central Missouri College) and earned his Associate Degree in Industrial Supervision and a job at Trenton Foods. Jerry and his family still reside in the Trenton area.