

# MISSOURI STATE SOCIETY DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION



*Proudly Honors*  
**PATRIOT OF THE MONTH**  
**FEBRUARY 2026**

**PHILIP JOE CLITHERO**  
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE  
SERGEANT (E-5)

DECEMBER 1, 1965 – MARCH 1969

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**Saint Charles Chapter, NSDAR**



Philip Joe Clithero enlisted in the United States Air Force on December 1, 1965. He was honorably discharged in March 1969.

Philip was attending college at MIZZOU and had finished his freshman year. He had a low number for the draft, so he decided to enlist. The first year, he was stationed at Lowry Air Force Base in Denver for training. He completed the Special Electronic Technician Course and a Texas Instruments Operators Training Course on a Digital Multichannel Filter System.

His next year of service was spent at Eielson Air Force Base in Fairbanks, Alaska. While stationed there, he encountered every weather extreme, including a 6.0 earthquake, temperatures down to 30° below zero, a two-week heat wave in the summer, and flooding of the Chena River. During the flooding, the building they were working in was surrounded by rising river waters. A helicopter dropped a small boat, and they used the boat to ferry to the helicopter for their rescue.

His last assignment was Bolling Air Force Base (now known as Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling). He lived in Washington, D.C., wore civilian clothes, and “no one knew we were military”. During his time of service, he never left U.S. soil, though Alaska was considered an overseas assignment.

Philip served together with two others from basic training in Denver, to Alaska, and ending in D.C. He noted that “We had lost track of each other, but about 2 years ago, we got together and spent a couple of days hashing through old stories. Since then, one has died.” He is very thankful for their time together.



After discharge, he worked in construction in Vandalia, Missouri, for three years. He then took advantage of the GI Bill and returned to college for three years, but did not finish. In 2006, at the age of 60, he finished his degree in Business Management from MIZZOU.

While cleaning out his mother's house after her death, there were very few things, but the things found showed what she really cared about, which was family. She saved every invitation, card, and announcement she ever received and every letter Philip sent her while he was in service. That meant a lot to him.

Philip was named after his uncle, Joe Clithero, who served in WWII. Philip and his wife, Donna, met before he enlisted. They have been married since 1979 and live in Columbia, Missouri. They have two adult children. Philip and his wife retired in March of 2020.

Carolyn Peterson of the Saint Charles Chapter, NSDAR, proudly nominates her brother, Philip Joe Clithero, as Patriot of the Month.