

MISSOURI STATE SOCIETY DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION



Proudly Honors
PATRIOT OF THE MONTH
MARCH 2026

MICHAEL BECK
UNITED STATES AIR FORCE
CORPORAL (E-4)
1971 – APRIL 10, 1974

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Michael Beck graduated from Trenton High School in May 1970. Expecting to be drafted, he chose to enlist with parental consent since he was under 18. He chose the Air Force because he liked airplanes. His six-week basic training was at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas. He felt he was fortunate that his training began in November because no training occurred on Thanksgiving, Christmas, or New Year's Day!

Mike completed his basic training in January 1971. He entered technical school at Sheppard Air Force Base in Wichita Falls, Texas, specializing in air conditioning and refrigeration for buildings. Following his 17 weeks of training, he was stationed at Little Rock Air Force Base.

The base was comprised of 1,400 structures, including residential buildings, dining facilities, and administrative offices. He and his colleagues rotated among all areas to gain experience. In addition, he joined his colleagues working in plumbing and electrical, to provide maintenance in missile silos, noting the extreme security to enter the silos. He remembers touching a 103-foot tall 9 mega ton nuclear warhead.

In October 1973, the Air Force Base prepared for deployment due to the Israel-Egypt war. He states that everything was ready to go when the war ended.

He went on leave in March 1974. With the Vietnam War winding down, soldiers were being discharged early, and he was honorably discharged on April 10, 1974, at the rank of E4.

Following his service, he planned to work for his uncle in Phoenix, Arizona, who owned a refrigeration and air conditioning business; however, his uncle passed away suddenly. He stayed in Little Rock until September 1974, when he returned to LaPlata, Missouri.

He credits his military training for setting him up for a successful civilian life. He worked in maintenance in various organizations from 1976 to 2018, becoming a jack of all trades.

Mike adds that the military has many career fields providing training for the transition to civilian life. He adds that there are more options now than when he entered during the Vietnam era.

Mike married Marcia in 1977. They have three children and live in Raymore, Missouri.

