

# Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution Proudly Honors

## Patriot of the Month



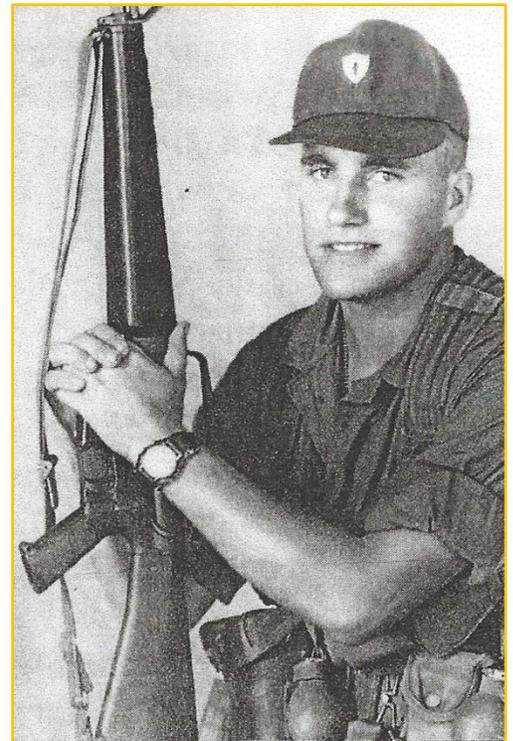
April 2018



# Tommy Ray Capps

United States Army

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Chapter



Tommy has led an impressive life of service to his country. From his country beginnings in rural central Missouri, to a brief period of military service in Vietnam that was cut short by an injury and to a long and distinguished career in law enforcement, he has exemplified the concept of serving others.

Tommy quit school at 16 because he was struggling with the classwork. He was later drafted into the United States Army and subsequently sent to Vietnam where his bravery and commitment to his fellow servicemen led him to receive several awards and medals, including one for dashing out under enemy fire to retrieve weapons and papers from the bodies of Viet Cong casualties. Tommy stated, "On his first day of jungle training in Vietnam, the Sergeant sent us into a field of "duds." Unfortunately, the Viet Cong had planted live land mines and four of our men were seriously injured. I learned that day to always be careful and never trusting."

Tommy was inducted in March, 1966. After three months and one day of combat, he was injured, an incident that left him with injuries to his head, left side, and the loss of vision in one eye. Following treatment and recuperation at Fitzsimmons Hospital, in Denver, Colorado, he was discharged in February, 1967.

Tommy earned the following badges and medals: Combat Infantryman Badge; Army Commendation Medal w/V Device; Purple Heart; National Defense Service Medal; Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross w/Palm Unit Citation Badge; Vietnam Service Medal; Vietnam Campaign Medal.

After his discharge, he returned to his family home in Missouri, and finished his high school education, graduating at the age of 23. Later he served as Chief of Police in two towns in central Missouri. In 1979, he went to work for the County Sheriff's Department. He assumed the position of detective in 1995. In 1998, he became a member of the State Technical Assistance Team, which helps investigate crimes for the entire state of Missouri. He was instrumental in the convictions of 235 pedophiles, child abusers, and child murders. As a very effective investigator, he was able to gain the confidence and trust of the child victims he had to question. He was able to work with the parents and children to find out what had happened without being offensive to their religious beliefs or upsetting the young girls. He retired in 2010.

In 2005, Tommy was diagnosed with polycythemia, a blood cancer caused by exposure to Agent Orange. He fought an 11 year war with the Veteran's Administration to have it classified as service connected. He also suffers with ischemic heart disease and type II diabetes that are presumptive diseases associated with Agent Orange. Recently diagnosed with kidney cancer, he had a tumor removed from one kidney and the other kidney completely removed. Not many Vietnam veterans live to be 70.

Tommy's wife, Teresa, has written a biography, "Sanctity," about his life. She skillfully blended sections about his rural childhood upbringing, with sections about his time in Vietnam, and sections about his career as an investigator.

Tommy has three children, three "bonus children," 26 grandchildren and 12 great grandchildren. Two of his sons have served in the Armed Forces and both have been in combat, one having served in Desert Storm, and the other having served in Kuwait.

Rock Island Daughters very proudly honor and recognize Tommy Ray Capps as Patriot of the Month and extend to him their deepest appreciation and gratitude for his very dedicated patriotic service to his community and to our great nation.