

Missouri State Society Daughters of the American Revolution Proudly Honors

Patriot of the Month



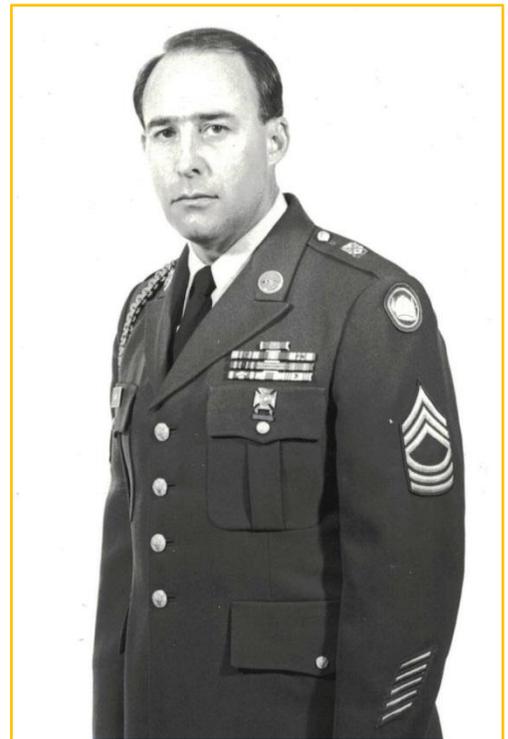
April 2018



Larry L. Martin

United States Army

Sponsored by:
John Sappington
Chapter



In the first draft lottery, Larry's number was 41 and he chose to enlist into the United States Army in April, 1970.

Portions of Larry's story are from "The Heart of a Warrior," a published book, written by Dr. Thomas E. Murray.

Larry Martin United States Army 8/4 Artillery...The DMZ. At the start of Lam Son 719, I was sent home on emergency leave. When I returned 60 days later, things were totally different. People were smoking, snorting, mainlining, drinking, taking pills, you take your pick. If you were predisposed to do drugs, by the time you had seven to ten months in country, you could be a hard-core addict. When I returned to the Battalion in April, 1971, there was a leadership program started where guys from the different Battery's would meet in Dong Ha once a month to discuss problems that existed in their areas. Somehow I was chosen as C Battery's representative. After meeting for two months and discussing everything but the drug situation, I became very vocal at one of the meetings (I know all of you find that hard to believe) and told the people there that unless we were going to try to come up with a solution to the drug problem we were wasting our time. Left Dong Ha and went back to C Battery.

About a week or so later, the Battery clerk came down to Gun 4 and told me to pack my bags: I was being transferred back to Dong Ha. A chopper picked me up and when I got to Dong Ha I was met by HHB CO, and the BIN surgeon. They took me to the building just south of the Enlisted Men's club and said here you are. There is the phone in case you need medical assistance, and here is some Valium and Thorazine to give the guys if they need it. My memory is fuzzy on this, but I think one guy was already there. Basically, I was a big brother to the guys that came in. I talked to them,

encouraged them, and took care of their needs. Cleaned them up when they threw up on themselves, etc. During my time there, I had 23 guys turn themselves in. I was told that 22 of them passed the urine test in Cam Ranh Bay and went home on a freedom bird instead of a hospital plane.

If I didn't have anyone in the program at the moment, I would go to the firing batteries and tell people about the program. People started calling me the Reverend Martin, or Preacher Martin. One guy I remember well is a guy nicknamed Dusty. The first 24/48 hours were the toughest because the guy had usually taken a hit of something right before turning himself in. We were at about the 36-hour mark; I was reading a Stars and Stripes when Dusty said "Hey Larry." I looked up and he had his M-16 pointed at my head. I continued to read the paper. He said, "Aren't you scared?" I told him that yes, I was, but if he was going to shoot me there wasn't anything I could do. He moved the barrel away from my head and pulled the trigger. The M-16 snapped on an empty chamber. Change one to the program. No more weapons, even if we were in a combat zone.

Larry spent 24 years in the National Guard. Once a month he put on the uniform and served his country. It gave him an opportunity to share his experiences with other vets and non-vets. It is also the reason why he can remember so many things about Vietnam that others forget about. Twenty-four years of telling war stories helps you remember them. Unlike some Nam veterans that he has come in contact with over the years, Vietnam does not define him. He describes himself as "an American who was going to be drafted, joined the Army, did his duty, came home and got on with his life." He was discharged in April, 1996, in Illinois.

Larry's medals include: Meritorious Service Medal; Army Achievement Medal w/one oak leaf cluster; National Defense Service Medal w/2 Bronze Service Stars; Non-Commissioned Officer Development Award (4); Army Service Ribbon; Overseas Training Ribbon; Vietnam Campaign Medal w/60 device; Long and Honorable Service Ribbon; Humanitarian Service Medal; Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry w/palm leaf; State Active Duty Ribbon; Expert Badge with Pistol, Rifle, and Machine Gun. Flood Duty in 1993, was a very meaningful experience for him.

Retired Master Sergeant Larry Martin, as president of the 8-4 Field Artillery Association was instrumental in the funding and construction of the 8th Battalion 4th Artillery Memorial Monument at the Fort Sill Constitution Park. He wanted the 28 soldiers from the unit who died in action to never be forgotten. There were many reasons why they served--a desire to serve their country, a need to experience new adventures, a wish to test themselves. These were some of the things that caused them to be in an exotic land far from home and family.

Larry was in sales and marketing for 42 years. He was a part-time Junior College instructor for 11 years. He also served as a part-time online Instructor for the University of Phoenix. He is a member of the Veterans of Foreign Wars, American Legion, 40+8, United Way, and March of Dimes.

John Sappington Daughters very proudly honor and recognize Larry L. Martin as Patriot of the Month and extend to him their deepest appreciation and gratitude for his very dedicated, patriotic service to our great nation.