

Rotary Club of Olympia

Club Member Veterans List and Service Summaries

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Originally compiled by Chuck Fowler, John Hough and Jim Balz

Fred Adair graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in 1952 and began his service aboard an amphibious transport during the Korean War, and retired from active Navy service more than two decades later, in 1974, as a captain (Army and Marines colonel equivalent). He was then assigned to a radar picket destroyer escort, based in the Pacific to guard against the threat of Soviet bombers approaching the west coast during the Cold War, followed by command of an ocean tug on search and rescue duty in Alaska. Fred entered the Navy nuclear propulsion program at the request of Admiral Hyman Rickover, the legendary founder of the service's entry into this new field of naval operations. After training in Idaho, he served on the commissioning crew of the cruiser U.S.S. Long Beach, the first nuclear powered surface ship in the Navy, and subsequently serving as the executive officer of a destroyer in the Atlantic, Mediterranean, and the Persian Gulf. Fred then served in the Secretary of Defense's office in the Pentagon, overseeing non-weapon nuclear energy matters. He attended the Armed Forces Staff College, was sent to oversee small boat combat operations in the rivers and offshore during the Vietnam War, and served as liaison with the 7th Fleet in the Western Pacific. After successive command of two more destroyers in the Pacific, he returned to Navy headquarters in Washington, D.C. as a nuclear energy and weapons senior staff officer before he retired.

Gerry Alexander was commissioned a Second Lieutenant in the U.S. Army in 1958 after completing the ROTC (Reserve Officers Training Corps) program at the University of Washington. He was assigned to the Army's Infantry School at Fort Benning, Georgia for basic infantry training. Gerry was then sent to airborne training, also at Fort Benning, followed by duty with the 4th Infantry Division with responsibilities as an infantry platoon leader, where he remained during his three years of active service. Following Gerry's discharge as a 1st lieutenant, he returned to the UW for law school, while continuing his reserve infantry training duty each summer for several years.

Jim Balz served six years on active duty in the Navy, from the late 1990s to the mid-2000s. He taught surgery to surgical residents (newly graduated doctors) at the Portsmouth Naval Hospital, one of the Navy's three teaching facilities. Jim then went to sea for three years, sailing around the world three times. He was the Battle Group Surgeon for the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Theodore Roosevelt, and later for the carrier U.S.S. Abraham Lincoln, serving during the Kosovo and Iraq conflicts.

Jack Belmont received his Army officer's commission after completing the ROTC program in 1972 at Stephen F. Austin State University in Texas. He then attended Army Airborne School at Fort Benning, Georgia, followed by additional training at the Army Air Defense Artillery School at Fort Bliss, Texas, on the operation of the Nike Hercules anti-aircraft missile. Jack then served as tactical director at the 49th Air Defense Group, 25th NORAD Division (North American Air Defense Command), followed by duty as a missile unit executive officer at Fort Lawton in Seattle. He served two years on active duty and left the Army as First Lieutenant in 1978.

Bret Buckley is an Army veteran who served between 1980 and 1985. He graduated from the Army ROTC program at Bowdoin College in Maine. Bret served as a captain in the Army Judge Advocate General Corps. He was a criminal trial attorney for the 2nd Infantry Division in Korea, then was Senior Defense Counsel for the Sixth Army at the Presidio, San Francisco. Bret maintains his military connection as the Presiding Judge for Thurston County Veterans Court, the state's first Veterans Court.

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Warren Carlson knew that military service was in his future after graduating from the University of Washington in 1965, so he avoided the draft by enlisting for Army Officer Candidate School. Upon completion of OCS he received a branch transfer from Infantry to the Adjutant General Corps (HR & other paperwork) and was sent to Worms, Germany to be an Administrative Officer in ComZ Logistical headquarters. He subsequently “rode the same desk” in the same building through two different offices and three reorganizations, surviving them all. Left the Army as a First Lieutenant when his three year and four-month service commitment ended and remained in Europe nine more years as a civilian, eventually creating the small international school photography business he enjoyed until retirement in 1999.

Don Chalmers served in the U.S. Army. He was an ROTC (Reserve Officers Training Corps) graduate of the University of Oregon and commissioned as a 2nd lieutenant in 1971. Don served in military intelligence and taught at the Officer’s Basic Course at Fort Huachuca, Arizona. He was discharged in 1974 as a captain.

Jim Cooper is a US army veteran, rank Specialist, served in active army 1993-1996 and WA National Guard 1996-2000, all as a Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Operations Specialist.

Felix D’Allesandro served in the Navy for eight years, from 1964 to 1972, as an aviation fire control technician. He was assigned to VF-111, a squadron flying F8U Crusader jet fighters from the aircraft carrier *U.S.S. Oriskany*, during the Vietnam War. Felix ended his military service as a Petty Officer 2nd Class, with VA-126, a squadron flying A-6 Intruder twin jet attack aircraft based at Whidbey Island Naval Air Station in Puget Sound.

George Dewey enlisted in the Army in 1969 and completed basic training at Ft. Ord, California, and advanced individual training at Ft. Gordon, Georgia. He was assigned to the Army Security Agency (ASA) as a Communication Center Specialist and stationed in Japan, where he served on active duty for two and a half years. George was honorably discharged as a Specialist 5 in 1971.

Mark Elliott joined the U.S. Army Veterinary Corps in 1960, the day he graduated from veterinary school at Kansas State University, and received a direct commission as an officer. Mark’s first tour of active duty was with a food inspection unit in New York City, with additional duties as the Brooklyn Army Terminal veterinarian overseeing food shipments to the troops in Europe. In 1962, Mark was sent to graduate school training in public health at the University of Minnesota. After Italian language training he then served in Asmara, Eritrea, Ethiopia, as post veterinarian and public health officer at a small, little-known Army Security Agency base. Mark’s last assignment was at the Quartermaster Center at Fort Lee, Virginia, where he trained Quartermaster Corps officers responsible for safe food contracting and purchasing. In 1967, after seven years of service, and he left active service at the rank of major.

Chuck Fowler is an Air Force veteran, an ROTC distinguished military graduate of the University of Puget Sound, and served on active duty during the Cold War from 1962 to 1965. He was a public affairs officer with a Strategic Air Command (SAC) Titan I underground Intercontinental Ballistic Missile unit in Denver during the Cuban Missile Crisis, and then with a B-52 bomber group near San Francisco when President John F. Kennedy was assassinated. Both times SAC was placed on DEFCON 2 (Defense Condition) full alert status, one readiness level short of nuclear war with the Soviet Union. Chuck was awarded the Air Force Commendation Medal for his Cold War service and completed his reserve duty as a captain in 1968.

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Corey Gauny: Enlisted in the Air Force on active duty in early 1988. He served in the Air Force for 22 and a half years as a firefighter. Corey earned his Fire Science Degree, EMT, Fire Officer III, Haz-Mat Train the Trainer, and Rescue Technician certifications. Corey served 19 years overseas, learned three languages and retired as a Deputy Fire Chief (MSgt) from Minot North Dakota, where he managed the fire department and led a team of 75 civilian and military firefighters, providing Fire and Emergency services for the base, its residents, and operations. The department consisted of two operational shifts, 911 communications center, and training, fire prevention, logistics programs, budget, and administrative services offices. Corey served two combat tours in Afghanistan and has supported Space Shuttle launch operations, Operation Desert Storm, Operations Desert Shield, Balkans Joint Operations and Operation Enduring Freedom. Corey retired in August 2010 and returned home to Olympia.

John Hough is a former Marine Corps captain who served on active duty from 1971 to 1974. He was a criminal trial attorney at bases in Virginia and California. John also served as a guard officer at high security facilities and for presidential helicopters and Air Force One. He was later Chief Defense Counsel and Deputy Staff Judge Advocate for Marine Corps Bases, Okinawa, Japan. John graduated with honors from the Marine Basic School infantry officer course and from the Naval Justice School.

Jim Larson is an Air Force veteran. He enlisted in 1970 and became an aircraft and engine mechanic on active duty at McChord Air Force Base in Tacoma. When Jim started college at Western Washington University he transferred to the Washington Air National Guard. He was retrained as a teletype operator, became a section chief with the rank of staff sergeant, and was discharged in 1976.

Bill Latta spent three years as an Air Force Medical Service Corps officer, from 1966 to 1969. He was stationed at Francis E. Warren Air Force Base in Cheyenne, headquarters of a SAC Minuteman I intercontinental ballistic missile unit. He was directly commissioned as second lieutenant, was the business officer of a 35 bed hospital on base, and left the service as a captain. Bill's Air Force experience led him to a career as a medical clinic administrator in Olympia.

Carl Lind retired from the U.S. Army as a full colonel in 1979 after a 32-year career. He began as an armor (tank) officer, and commanded Armored Cavalry units from the platoon to regimental levels in Germany, the US and Korea. Carl attended the NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) Defense College, and was transferred to the Pentagon where he headed the Congressional Inquiry Division as it responded to the 50 thousand letters per year received by Congressional representatives, as well as the Vice President of the U.S., during the war in Vietnam. Carl's last assignment in Vietnam was as advisor to the Vietnamese National Military Academy, and later as a professor, taught English at the U. S. Military Academy at West Point. After a tour at the Pentagon, he directed the Army's was in Europe with NATO and SHAPE (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe) as a deputy to General Alexander Haig, who was later Secretary of State under President Reagan. He holds, among other awards, the Defense Superior Service Medal.

Jerry Moody began his military service in 1972 and served in the U.S. Coast Guard as a Petty Officer 2nd Class, aviation electronics technician, assigned to a Sikorsky H3 helicopter search and rescue crew, stationed primarily at the St. Petersburg Air Station in Florida. Leaving the service, he went to nursing school as a civilian, and then joined an Air Force Reserve aeromedical evacuation squadron at McChord AFB near Tacoma as an officer and instructor flight nurse, and flew all over the world transporting military patients from bases in the Philippine Islands, England, and Turkey. Jerry then entered the UW dental school, graduating in 1987, switching his commission to the Dental Corps. He ended his 20 year Air Force as a reservist 1996 at McChord in Tacoma, with the rank of major.

Sean Padget served in the U.S. Army from 1992 to 2000 as a Psychological Operation Specialist with the 7th Psychological Operations Group, Special Operations Forces Command. At language school he was trained to speak Russian and also certified in Japanese. Sean spent nine months deployed to Bosnia-Herzegovina from December, 1995 to August, 1996, serving with NATO allied forces in 1995, immediately after the signing of the Dayton Agreement, the Bosnia and Herzegovina peace treaty. He ended his service in the reserve as a sergeant.

Denny Peterson was on active duty in the U.S. Navy during the late 1950s. He was a bombardier/ navigator in a heavy attack squadron, flying the A3D Skywarrior twin jet bomber from the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Bon Homme Richard. Denny remained in the Navy Reserve as an air intelligence officer after active duty, and retired as a Commander in 1977.

Jim Phillips served in the Navy Reserve from 1951 to 1959, first in Tacoma. He served two and a half years on active duty, as a storekeeper 2nd class, and on two ships, the U.S.S. George Eastman, a laboratory ship with special equipment based at the San Francisco Naval Base, and the destroyer U.S.S. Blue.

Larry Poplack served active duty in the United States Army, 1966-1968, in the European Central Control Agency and the 59th Military Police Corps. Following active duty, Larry was assigned to an Army Reserve Control Group from 1968 to 1972.

Ron Rants spent two years in the Army in the 1950s, and completed his basic training at Fort Bliss, Texas. The Korean War ended while he was in Texas, and Ron was sent to the 1st Army Division during the Cold War, originally in a 90mm anti-aircraft gun defense battalion in Newark, New Jersey, and later at Fort Totten in New York City and Sandy Hook, New Jersey. Ron's unit later converted to the Nike Ajax anti-aircraft guided missile, the first commissioned in the Army, which trained on Long Island.

Charles "Charlie" Roe graduated from the College of Puget Sound, now the University of Puget Sound, and was commissioned through the Air Force ROTC program as a Second Lieutenant in 1953. He served three years in the USAF (1954-1957), and afterward the G.I Bill financed his law school stints at the University of California-Berkeley and the University of Washington. He retired as a State of Washington Senior Assistant Attorney General with the Department of Ecology.

Steve Ryan served in Army signal intelligence from 1970 to 1973. After advanced training he served at an Army facility near Udorn, Thailand, the site of a major Air Force base during the Vietnam War. Steve was then stationed at Vint Hill Farms, Virginia, an Army and National Security Agency signals intelligence facility. Upon separation from the Army his rank was Specialist (E-4).

John Sabo is an Army Infantry veteran and received his commission after completing Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, Georgia. He served as a first lieutenant beginning in 1967, and after training at Fort Lewis and returning to Fort Benning, was transferred to duty in Schweinfurt, Germany. After completing Jungle Operations School in Panama, John served as a platoon and part-time company commander in the I Corps Americal Division during the Vietnam War in 1969 and 1970, before completing his service.

Joe Scuderi was in the Marine Corps Reserve and served from 1980 through 1984. He attended Platoon Leader Class in Quantico, Virginia.

Jim Young graduated from the University of Iowa medical school in June, 1960 and received a direct commission in the U.S. Air Force. After his marriage, he began his military service internship at Madigan General Hospital in Tacoma. In July, 1961 Jim began a three year residency at Walter Reed Hospital in Washington, D.C., where he and his wife "managed to survive the Cuban Missile Crisis". He then spent three years in Spain at Torrejon Air Force Base, and "in spite of a gracious offer" to go to Vietnam, Jim decided to leave the service and head for Olympia, where he arrived in late 1967.

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