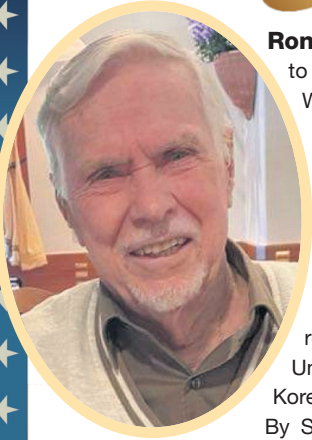


# VETERAN OF THE MONTH

## Tellico Village VFW Post 12135

A circular portrait of Ron Bastien, an elderly man with white hair and a goatee, wearing a light-colored sweater over a dark collared shirt. He is smiling slightly and looking towards the camera.

**Ron Bastien** was born on November 15, 1931 in Flushing, NY to Ronald and Mae Bastien. He grew up with two brothers, William and Peter. On December 7, 1941 Japan Invaded Pearl Harbor, and at the age of 10, Ron remembers thinking that war could seem exciting to a kid. During World War 2, Ron's 18-year-old cousin served as a Marine on Wake Island. He survived the war, but spent all of his WWII service as a prisoner of war in Japanese prison camps.

Ron enrolled at Georgia Tech in 1949. After a couple years of college, he eventually quit and in 1952, he received a letter of "Greetings" from the President of the United States indicating that he was being drafted for the Korean War.

By September of 1952, Ron was inducted into the Army at Camp Kilmer, NJ and was then sent to Fort Indiantown Gap, PA for 16-week Infantry training. Upon completion, he was assigned to the 7th Engineer Combat Battalion and performed multiple duties, such as a stockage guard, court martial guard, and eventually completed and taught the Infantry Leadership Course. On May 23, 1953, Ron completed his duty at the "Gap", and was bussed to Ft. Meade, MD and then he was shipped by train to Yucca Flats, NV.

On the way to Yucca Flats, the train derailed and the only casualty from the accident was the engineer. When Ron arrived at Yucca Flats, he participated in above

ground atomic bomb testing, which a newspaper article described as "...first hand combat training in atomic warfare." After his temporary assignment to Yucca Flats was complete, he was sent to Fort Lewis, WA where he was placed on a ship headed for Pusan, Korea in support of the Korean War.

In Korea he was assigned to the 4405 Division Headquarters, 25th Infantry Division and arrived at his posting on July 19, 1953, which was 8 days before the Armistice was signed. Ron eventually left Korea on July 20, 1954 aboard the Marine Adder, as the Assistant to the Sergeant Major for the return trip back to the United States. He was then separated from the Army on August 21, 1954 and spent the next 6 years on the inactive reserve. In hindsight, Ron states that he would have enjoyed a career in the Army. He has more pride in the two years he spent in the service than anything else he has accomplished. His decorations include the Korean Service Medal with 1 bronze service star and a United Nations Service Medal.

Ron is married to Peggy Bastien and has a daughter named Carroll, who serves with the Secret Service. They also have a son named Greg, who served in the Army for 14 years as a Helicopter Pilot and is also a Desert Storm/Desert Shield veteran. Greg continues his service to the nation with Homeland Security. Ron and Peggy currently reside in Tellico Village, TN. He is a member of the VFW Post #12135 and volunteered with the St. Thomas Catholic Church as a Stephen Minister and then served as a Stephen Leader. Ron and Peggy are also blessed with 5 grandkids and 4 great grandkids.

The Tellico Village VFW Post #12135 General meeting is held at 7:00 p.m. in the Tellico Village Yacht Club every third Wednesday of the month. Further information can be found on the Post website at <https://www.tellicovillagevfwpost.org/>