

VETERAN OF THE MONTH

Tellico Village VFW Post 12135



Richard Norman was born in Carbondale, Illinois in 1947. His immediate family have an incredible military history. His father Paul and three brothers (Bob, Loren, and Chuck) all served in the US Navy. His brother, Bob, was aboard the USS California BB-44 at Pearl Harbor and he was blown overboard and was reported killed in action (KIA) and was later found in a work party ashore. Bob served aboard the re-commissioned USS California through the end of WWII as Chief Bosun Mate. Paul enlisted the day after Bob was reported KIA, completed boot camp at Great Lakes, and received electrician training at Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa. He was a Plank holder and served aboard the USS Stern DE-187 from 1943-1945. Richard's father, Paul, earned service medals for Europe, Africa, and Asia while serving aboard USS Stern. Paul was called back into service for Korea and Atom Bomb tests at Bimini serving aboard the USS Isherwood DD-520 EM2 Electrician Mate Second Class. His other brothers, Loren and Chuck, served in Korea and Chuck became a Mustang officer and retired as a Lieutenant Commander and a pilot.

Richard enlisted in the Navy in March 1966, and after boot camp in San Diego, he was assigned to the USS Pledge MSO-492 in Long Beach, CA. He served as a fireman and a seaman during Market Time Patrols in Vietnam and was transferred to the USS Epping Forest MCS-7, where he became an assault boat coxswain and served on The Shallow

Minesweepers, also known as MSLs, performing mine sweeping and cargo ship escort duties and served as Captain's Gig Commander.

Richard attended Electronic Technician A & C schools at Treasure Island in San Francisco, CA and became an Electronics Technician Petty Officer 2nd Class (ETN2) upon graduation and was ordered to Prospective Electronic Materiel Officer school in San Diego and then to the Electronics Materiel Officer billet aboard USS Mauna Kea AE-22. The USS Mauna Kea deployed to Vietnam shortly after he arrived and for the next six months, the ship ran a regular pattern of load ammo at Subic Bay, re-arm ships at Yankee Station repeatedly. While aboard Mauna Kea, Richard was selected for the Navy Enlisted Scientific Education Program (NESEP) and eventually assigned to the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill NESEP contingent. He was then transferred to the

USS Hector AR-7 in Sasebo Japan while performing repair services in Vung Tau. USS Hector provided service to the fleet for the rest of 1971 in Long Beach. Once again USS Hector departed for the Western Pacific via Pearl Harbor on January 3, 1972 arriving in Sasebo on January 26th where she served as the flagship for COMSERVGRU THREE. While providing service to the fleet during this deployment, the USS Hector visited Vung Tau, Vietnam, Hong Kong, DaNang, Vietnam, Subic Bay RP, Okinawa, and Keelung, Taiwan. On August 26, 1972, USS Hector was relieved as COMSERVGRU THREE Flagship and departed Sasebo for the USA and arrived in Long Beach, CA on September 9, 1972.

In 1972, the USS Hector was awarded a MERITORIOUS UNIT COMMENDATION that read in part the following: For meritorious service from 26 January to 25 August 1972 in direct support of United States SEVENTH Fleet combat operations in Southeast Asia. USS HECTOR contributed materially to the success of these operations by rendering vital fleet repair services to United States and friendly naval forces operating in the Republic of Vietnam. USS Hector also received a Republic of Vietnam Meritorious Unit Citation and three additional Vietnam Service Medals during this deployment.

Upon his return to the continental United States (CONUS) in 1973, Richard was assigned to the Development and Training Center at Naval Station San Diego where he served until his discharge from active duty in September 1973. Richard then enlisted in the Hawaii Air National Guard as a staff sergeant (E-5) for two years and later in the North Carolina National Guard as a staff sergeant (E-6).

After his military service, Richard joined Sperry Univac as a field engineer, then moved to Computer Maintenance Corporation (CMC) out of Norcross, GA where he specialized in maintaining Universal Automatic Computer (Univac), Client/server Application Development Environment (CADE) and Bowe systems and established a Personal Computer (PC) division in North Carolina. Richard purchased the PC Division from Computer Maintenance Corporation and operated it until he sold it in 2000, and entered semi-retirement; building a sailboat in his basement, managing the tool department at a local Lowe's, and planning his full retirement in Tellico Village.

Richard and his wife Mary, melded their families in 1989 with Mary's son Kas and Richard's daughter Trish and son Paul. Richard and Mary like to travel in their RV, and to date, have visited 44 US states and 5 Canadian Provinces. Richard is a Life Member and Charter member the Tellico Village Veteran of Foreign Wars (VFW) Post #12135. He has served as the VFW's Webmaster, Judge Advocate and three years as Core Projects Chairman.

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/>