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I was going to go in the Army because I was fixing to be drafted when a Chief Petty Officer phoned me and said, "Would you like to go in the Navy?" I said, "I sure would." and went from Rusk to Nacogdoches and joined up. I went by train to San Diego, California, for boot camp. I got to go back to see Mary Bess, my wife today, graduate from high school, and then I went to Great Lakes, Illinois, where I attended the Corps school for six months, training to be a medic.

I went to Corpus Christi for three months and did my internship as a hospital corpsman and learned how to do a little bit of everything.

A draft for 30 corpsmen came to our base as the Korean war was winding down. Guess what? I was one of the 30 who become corpsmen for the Marine s. Mary Bess and I married in 1954 and she went with me to California where I went through four weeks of combat training. After that, I got on a military sea transport ship, the U.S.S Weaver, and went to Kobe, Japan, for nine months.

When I was at Middle Camp Fujiyama, out of Gotemba, I was out in the Navy, attached to the Marine Corps under Army Command. I don't know how, but I was. I was a senior corpsman in our 250-man company that had four corpsman. Some people said that if they hadn't dropped the atomic bomb, we'd probably still be fighting. The Japanese had caves

stockpiled with food, and ammunition. Just a short while after the occupation, I went to Hiroshima and Nagasaki. We sure don't want anything like that destruction to ever happen in this world again.

We returned from Kobe to Camp Pendleton where I worked in the hospital laundry and later in transportation. I got out of the Marine Corps and was attached back to the navy until I was discharged from service. I stayed home with my wife and new baby for a short time.

I went to school on the G. I. Bill, one semester at TJC. Later I worked at a Catholic hospital in Beaumont while completing my pre-med degree at Lamar University. I couldn't afford the time or money for med school so I taught school, for one semester. I represented American Home Products which owned three large drug companies, and for 37 years, I called on physicians, hospitals, and pharmacies. What I learned in the military affected my career. I wanted to be a doctor, but what I did was good and I had more time with my family. We have three children.

I was fortunate to be a Christian in the service, having been saved at age nine. I worked with a Presbyterian chaplain some on the base. We had Sunday Services but it was hard getting guys out to the services.

God led us to this place. Mary Bess and I were raised in Rusk, lived in Fort Worth for thirty seven years, but this is our home. The Lord worked it all. God has a long range plan, not just for today, but on down the road. He's got plans for us.

I had a quadruple bypass in 1985 and several other things done since, but I am doing well.

My mother died when I was fourteen months old and so my aunt and uncle raised me.

GENERIC EXPERIENCES:

It was a big trip for a 19-year-old boy from East Texas. When I saw a sign at the boot camp that said, "Welcome to the United States Navy," I said, "Boy, this is going to be great." First off, a barber cut off all my hair. Then clothes were issued and we put our civilian clothes in a box and shipped them back home. We took all of our underwear, socks, T-shirts, hats and all other clothes and stenciled them. I had 3623117. I guess that will stick with me for the rest of my life. I thought boot camp would never end, but it did after 11 weeks.

In those days, you got paid by cash. When you were in boot camp you didn't need money 'because you couldn't spend it. You didn't have anywhere to go. You couldn't even have candy, a coke or anything like that. So when you first got out, a coke tasted awful good and a chocolate bar was just delicious.

Oh yes, you know being a nineteen year old kid from East Texas was a thing that.... I'd been plowing mules and stuff like that and I'd never marched or did anything you tuck your T-shirt like this and your hat like this. If there's any dirt in it, you had demerits and you had to walk that night for two hours with a rifle on the parade ground. So you had to be very clean. You know your head sweats anyway, and you'd just set your hat down very easy like. Because you didn't want that hat to get dirty. And you wanted to make sure your T-shirt didn't get dirty and make your neck dirty cause the inspectors are there every morning. At boot camp, that's what you had to go through. But that was o.k., I thought. It's discipline. I think every young person would be great to go through the service. It keeps you disciplined and you go eat at breakfast and lunch. All of this at certain times of day that you do this. You do it every day. It doesn't change and it seems to give you some discipline in your life.

You know kids growing up today we don't have any discipline. We like that and somebody telling you something to do and be responsible. You get up in the morning and we had chow. We ate at 6:00 o'clock. In boot camp they make minded our parents when we were young, but no regimes in your life. And they put that in there.