

Honor Flight Board

I wanted to take a moment to express my sincere gratitude for allowing me the opportunity to be a guardian with my dad, Don Osswald on the April 8th flight. It was an experience and day neither of us will ever forget.

For a few weeks leading up to the trip my dad kept telling me to cancel us out of it, he didn't feel he needed to go or should go. Upon our return he thanked me for not giving in and that he would tell any other veteran- to not think twice about taking it.

My dad is a very quiet, proud man. He isn't the person who will randomly start a conversation with someone he doesn't know. It takes a lot to gain his respect and trust. He didn't talk much during the day of the trip, but on the flight home something changed and I saw a side to my father I never knew was there.

Growing up, my brother and I knew he had been in the Marines and he is very proud of that. There was a shadow box in our house that had his medals and pins. We looked at it every day, but if we asked questions, we were given the simplest of answers. We knew he was in ~~two times~~ Okinawa and his unit was in Vietnam twice. That was the extent of it.

On the day of the trip, I witnessed my father break down a few times, and stand in awe at others. I heard my father laugh and saw the biggest smiles. I shed many tears of my own that day and truly enjoyed seeing Washington DC thru my father's eyes. This was my 4th time to our Nation's Capital and I saw it from a totally different perspective.

I never knew my father was on the Marine Corp Sharp shooter squad, was stationed in Korea for cold weather training. Repelled out of

helicopters to get to a “hidden” destination, that he “walked the plank” in the middle of the ocean because the ship he was stationed on broke down. I didn’t even know he was “on float” for months at a time. I learned that one of his missions “on float” was to guard a nuclear submarine. I learned that he joined the Marines because his draft number was coming up and he liked the Marines better, so joined. His draft came up while he was in boot camp.

The highlight of his day was the Marine Corp Silent Drill Team. After that the smile never left his face. Second being “Mail Call.”

Within a few days of returning home, my mom called and asked what I did to my father. As she puts it, “He hasn’t stopped talking. I don’t know who this man is.” He is very willing to answer everybody’s questions and tell stories now.

I can’t thank you enough for making not only my relationship with my father stronger and better, but also that of our whole family. What you do and all the work and little things that are put into this trip are beyond any words of thanks I could ever say.

Sincerely,



Nicole Knoblock