



Gene Gray

My life after 1962

As a high school grad I entered into my first contract!

Dad agreed to not break my plate if I went to college and got a job. I found a job at Williams Brothers Market as Box Boy, and I enrolled into Hancock College. I graduated in 1965 with an A.A. in Business Administration and transferred to Fresno State College. I left there in February, 1967.

First drafted then enlisted into U.S. Army Signal Corps in March, 1967. Took basic at Fort Lewis, Washington (now called Joint Base Lewis McCord), near Tacoma.

Then off to Southeastern Signal School at Ft. Gordon, Georgia. Upon completion I was awarded a 30 day leave and an all expense trip to the Republic of South Viet Nam. I was assigned to Company C, 1st Signal Brigade for pay and to a Special Forces B-Team (B-42) in the Mekong Delta at place called Chow Duc, RVN, right on the Cambodian border. It was 1967 – 1968 and yes I was there for the Tet offensive.

After Viet Nam I returned to Ft. Lewis, and worked at MARS Station A7-USA, until my enlistment was up. It was during this time that I met Marcia Clark and brought home with me. Like any other tourist I had to bring home a soveniour. Instead of a spoon or a mug, I brought home a wife! LOL



After the Army, I went back to Williams Brothers, to Cal Poly and started building a house in Nipomo. I dropped out of college and went to work at Coast Welding Supply. I started out working as a material expeditor then transferred to plant operations and ran the acetylene plant. I worked there for about 15 years; I earned the Employee of the Year award for 1988. Coast Welding was sold to Union Carbide in 1990, and then it became Altair. I left Altair in 1994.

I obtained my Commercial Drivers License and went to work for Action Van & Storage as a over the road driver. I tried this line of work for 2 years but didn't really fit into it. I did get to drive to and through 30 of the lower forty eight. In 1999, I tried driving again. This time I lasted 2

months driving for J.B.Hunt Transportation Company and 5 months B&B Amusements.

In 2004, we moved back to Onalaska, Washington, where I volunteered as a van driver for the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) for 5 years and was the Hospital Service Coordinator for 2 years at American Lake V.A. Hospital in Tacoma.

I am now retired, serving as Commander of DAV Chapter 29, Centralia, Washington, when I am not mowing my 1 acre lawn.

Oval Gene Gray

SMHS Class of 1962