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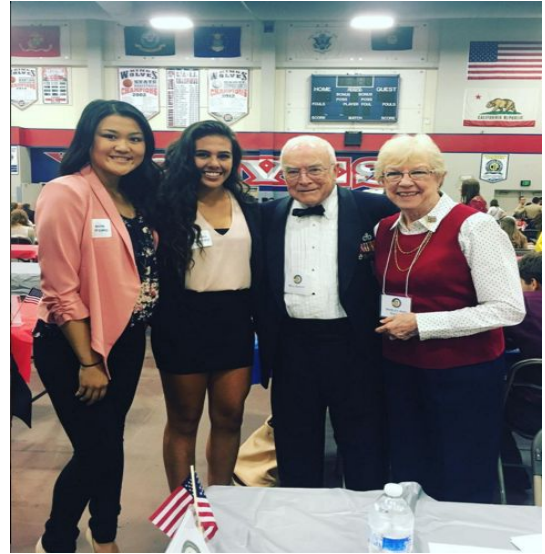
Period 3

Bill Gavitt

United states Air force

May 1956 to July 1986

2016



Bill Gavitt

William F. Gavitt, Jr was born on September 14, 1934 in Westerly, Rhode Island, a small New England town. Bill Gavitt had two loving parents and two siblings. His father was a florist and his mother a homemaker. He graduated from Westerly High School in 1951 and then went to Dartmouth College during the Korean war. He wanted to join the Air Force ROTC as a pilot but after ten and a half months of flight training he didn't get in because of his lack of depth perception. Col. Gravitt was commissioned as a Second Lieutenant, through Dartmouth's AFROTC program in 1955. After his graduation he worked in the Rhode Island Development Council for ten months waiting to be called to the U.S. Air Force. He met his future wife Shirley ann Ashton, at the Development Council. He then entered the United States Air Force in May 1956. He served in the Strategic Air Command in Ballistic Missile Operations and Maintenance and he also was a Radar Operator. He earned a Master's of Science Degree in economics from South Dakota State University in 1971. His professional military education includes Squadron

Officers School, the Industrial College of the Armed Forces and was a Distinguished Graduate from the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island in 1974.

A year after he joined the Air Force as a commissioned officer in 1956 he was chosen as one of eight assigned to Germany out of the 94 in his class. In 1957, he was assigned to be a Radar Operator in Germany, at one of the six U.S. radar sites. Before he left for Germany he married Shirley ann and they went to Germany together. His duties were monitoring the East German and Czechoslovakian borders for unknown aircraft and intruders, during the Iron Curtain time. Col. Gavitt and Mrs. Gavitt were stationed in Germany for four years and while there they had three children. Col. Bill. Gavitt then was a Missile Combat Crew Member working with Atlas, Titan, and Minuteman ICBM (Inter Continental Ballistic Missile) systems at Ellsworth Air Force Base, South Dakota (1967- 1970). Prior to South Dakota, Col. Gavitt was stationed in Salina, Kansas, and Vietnam.

Gavitt was part of the Minuteman Education Program, which allowed one to have an education while down in the silo. He was then sent to Salina, Kansas between the years of 1961 to 1964 and worked in the Ballistic Missile Operations as well as Strategic Air Command. His next overseas assignment was in Vietnam during 1965 and 1966 as a Radar Operator in Monkey Mountain, Da Nang, Vietnam. Contact with his family was difficult while he was stationed in different areas all over Vietnam. While he was in Vietnam he got one phone call to home to his family. Following the war, he moved to Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota and ten,

March Air Force Base in California in 1970 and stayed for four years. He went to the U.S. Naval War College in 1974. In Newport, Rhode Island. Following they, moved to the Minot Air Force Base in North Dakota in 1974 to 1977 and for the next three years served at Grand Forks Air Force Base in North Dakota. Lastly he went to Norton Air Force Base in San Bernardino, California from 1983 until retirement in 1986 .

Overall Bill Gavitt has served for 30 years, 21 of these years in the Strategic Air Command in Ballistic Missile Operations and Maintenance at bases in North and South Dakota, Kansas, Texas, and California. During his 30 years he has rose in ranks to the grade of Colonel. He has traveled to all fifty states and to nineteen foreign countries. He has never regretted any decisions he has made while in the military and has enjoyed every part of his service. “You live a life of service, helping others is what life's all about, you dedicate yourself to a life of service”, He said with honor. “Everyone I served with was memorable, and was great to serve with.” Col. Bill Gavitt is a very honorable man. He is decorated with the Legion of Merit, the Meritorious Service Medal with three OLC, the Air Force Commendation Medal with 1 OLC, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with Valor Device and four OLC, Combat Readiness Medal with one OLC, National Defense Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Cross with Device, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal, Air Force Overseas Long Tour Ribbon, Air Force Overseas Short Tour Ribbon.

He also holds the Master Missileman Badge and the Senior Weapons Controller Badge. Apart from his military awards Gavitt has been awarded for his involvement in local civic and

military organizations. In 1999, he received the Mayor's service award from Riverside Mayor, Ron Loveridge. In 2000, the Exchange Club of Riverside inscribed him in their Book of Golden Deeds. In 2001 he was presented the Mayor's Service Award and in 2003 he was chosen for City of Riverside's Spirit Award given by the Mayor. In 2005 he received the Sister Cities International Dick Oakland award as the Outstanding State Coordinator in the United States. Most recently, on July 4, 2010, Certificate of Congressional Honor presented to William F. Gavitt JR, Col. Lewis Le Milletts Veterans Services Award Presented by Congressman Ken Calvert, 44th Congressional District. Lastly the David Goldware Friend of Vietran award was presented in October, 2015 and the Veterans Community Service Award, presented by the Riverside County Philharmonic.

Col. Gavitt has been involved in many Veterans' organizations after his retirement. He believes that it is important for veterans to participate in Veterans' organizations. He is a life member of the Military Officers Association of America, and The Air Force Association. He served as Chairman of the Board of Governors for two years and was selected as a Governor Emeritus. He was the State Director in the Inland Empire for two years. He served as California Council Secretary and Vice President. For three years he was the President of the California Council of Chapters of the Military Officers Association of America. He is a life member of the Disabled American Veterans , the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Vietnam Veterans of America, and the National Association of Members of the Former Fifteenth Air Force Association, a life member of the Air Force Association, a life member of the Riverside National Cemetery Support Committee, a member of the Military Affairs Committee of the Greater Riverside Chambers of

Commerce and the March Air Force Base Silver Eagles. He is currently serving on the International Relations Council of Riverside Board of Directors.

Today Gavitt is 81, and is still involved in his Veterans' organizations and lives in Riverside County near March Air Force Base with his wife, Shirley ann, his biggest fan. He has been married to Shirley ann for almost sixty years and has three children, two sons and a daughter, and two granddaughters who live nearby. Gavitt has been attending The King High Remembers Program for the last 15 years stating that he wouldn't miss it for anything. Col. Gavitt was dedicated to his service in the military, for which he has been rightfully recognized. He is a very thankful and kind man which has made our experience tremendous and unforgettable.