

Christopher Ruiz

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Cal Knauer

Air Force

1959-1963

2016

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Cal Knauer an Air Force technician born June 2, 1939. He joined the Air Force at the age of 20 years old in 1959. His friends also joined right after high school. Ever since Knauer can remember airplanes have always held a huge fascination. He found that the Air Force was the best military branch for him to join and serve his country. Knauer was sent to San Antonio Air base in Texas. It took a plane and a bus ride to arrive there for basic training. The Air Force makes certain that during boot camp that everyone is brought on the same level. They also make sure nobody gets too confident of their past rank or achievements in boot camp. Boot camp lasts thirteen weeks. Fortunately, for Knauer it wasn't not going to be that long because of the technical classes he was taking while in boot camp.

Shortly after Knauer was sent to a school in Mississippi to learn about Electronic Countermeasures (ECM) later on he became apart of ECM Unit. This unit helped block enemy bomber targeting radars so they would be unable to drop bombs on us and the Allied bases. It took him ten months to learn everything he needed to learn about being a Air Force technician. Eventually, the Air Force stationed him in March Air Force Base, California. Knauer spent the

last three remaining years of his service there. This made him feel that his time at the base helped him wise up and mature as a person. At that time, March Air Base there was a lot to do. He had to replace and fix broken transmitters on airplanes. There was only one thing that really ticked him off about his job is that the copilots who would always over use the transmitters and run them down constantly. Boeing B-47 Stratojets arrived and Knauer had the pleasure of working and repairing at March Air Force Base.

During his time in the Air Force he proudly earned the rank of Airman First Class E. When he was off duty Knauer could visit his family all the time he wanted to as long as he got back to the base on time then everything would be okay, but if not there would be a punishment waiting for him. In 1963, near the time President John.F Kennedy got assassinated. Knauer left the Air Force for good. On his last day of service he came back for his things and said goodbye to his commander and friends. On his way out he threw away his uniform in the trash which to this day was a really regrettable and horrible decision. Soon after his departure from the military he found a nice part time job flipping hamburgers at a burger place. By the stroke of destiny it was where he actually met the girl of his dreams and fell in love, years later they decided to get marry. Today, Knauer is seventy six years old and his wife is younger and used to be a teacher. He has so far lived a pretty happy and successful life. He lives in Riverside and is a proud owner of two orange groves. He had a son who passed away a few years ago at the age of twenty six and a daughter who is forty seven. He has a brother who lives in Laguna Beach and is still alive, but unfortunately his sister on the other hand recently passed away. Knauer greatly encourages others especially the younger generations to join the military since most people have no goals after high school, the military is a great experience to grow and mature as a

person. Knauer's opinion on war "if we don't fight to win we don't belong there" which are words to live by if we don't plan on winning a fight then what's the point of fighting in the first place. All veterans on or off the front lines are considered heroes in the eyes of the people and may not see themselves as one but we are humongously thankful for your service and for all you have done thank you Cal Knauer.