

David Elias

Karen Millan

Period 1

Gabriel Valenzuela

United States Army

Between 1950-1952

04-25-16

Gabriel Valenzuela

Gabriel Valenzuela is and was a great soldier, who risked his own life to serve his country. Valenzuela entered the enlistment right after graduating from high school. Still to this day, Valenzuela is a proud veteran, and proud of being in the service. Valenzuela served in the Army, he was drafted but it would be nothing he regretted nor grieved about. Even at the age of 87, Valenzuela would proudly return to the Army.

Born on March 17, 1929 ever since a little kid he wanted to be apart of something big. Raised in Texas, Valenzuela did not grow up in the richest of communities, but was still living a happy life, and he was and is grateful for everything he had. Valenzuela was involved in many things such as football and track, being in Boy Scouts at the age of 12, and even worked as a guard at age 14. Valenzuela met his beloved girlfriend Gloria before joining service, they supported each other and loved each other very much.

When Valenzuela turned 18, he had to sign himself into service just in case they needed him. By the time he turned 21 he was drafted in California, year of 1950. Having to leave his loved ones behind, he was off to training camp. Valenzuela experienced many weeks of training camp before fighting for our country in Korea. His personal life was not taken from him, though. Gloria and Valenzuela constantly sending each other hand-written notes was something they

constantly did. Eventually, Gloria had called Valenzuela her “future husband,” which sealed the deal by the time Valenzuela would return. As training camp continued, and even with shooting at practice targets, all the training he had, it would be nothing compared to real war.

As Valenzuela and his division got called to go to Korea, he had to get himself mentally prepared. Serving under General Douglas MacArthur, they had boarded the boat as they went to Korea. It would be many weeks until the boat would arrive to Korea. Valenzuela only ate crackers and boiled eggs, due to the fact that he was sea-sick for 17 and a half days. As the cold boat ride came to the end, they began to approach their targeted location that they were assigned to, Seoul. Prior to arriving in Seoul, Valenzuela was told to do absolutely anything for survival. The boat encountered icy waters, which forced the soldiers to get off and walk on ice. Valenzuela and his squad stepped off the boat, and through the icy winds and mist they have a sniper shooting toward them. Valenzuela now running through ice cold wind, with his M1 rifle he realized what fighting for his country is all about. As his days went by in Korea, he learned more in a few days in Korea than he did in his 14 weeks of training. Valenzuela and his crew had used the strategy of calling in airstrikes and going through the streets to take out the enemy. Valenzuela and his squad would be in Korea fighting for two years and three quarters before getting called back to America.

As Valenzuela safely returned to America, he realized how great it is to be free in our country. Valenzuela eventually married Gloria, which would be a 54 year long marriage. Valenzuela and his wife had four children, three boys and one daughter. Valenzuela learned many things from being apart of the army, he learned to be a great father, and a better man, how to be organized and neat, and to appreciate loved ones. He continued his life, and picked up

working on cars as a hobby of his. He worked as an electrical engineer, and supported his family very well. Valenzuela is a respected veteran of the United States of America Army. Valenzuela is saluted for being apart of the army for two years, and being a man any person and look at as an example to look towards. Thank you for your service, Chico.