

Annabell Mako
Melissa Sayers
Emily Habash

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John Robison

Former United States Army Soldier John Robison is a brave, kind-hearted man that helped fight in the Vietnam War and made some memories he would never forget. Mr. Robison was born in New York City on May 19, 1947 and was raised in Pico Rivera and Whittier, CA starting in 1950. Then, as a senior in high school, he thought about joining the army. The reason he went into service was because he was constantly caught in the middle of his parents fighting because he is an only child. He went to an office where he enlisted and got paperwork to join. He wanted to be in the airborne division, and he took the tests and passed them all. The only thing that stopped him was that he needed 20/20 vision, and they were worried about his depth perception. He then made some memories and made friends that he wouldn't forget and still keeps in touch with.

As a senior in high school, Mr. Robison thought about joining the army, and by the time he was 18 years old, he did it. He said he mostly did it to get away from home, and one day, he went to an office where he enlisted and got his paperwork. He then talked to his father who had been in the Coast Guard in World War 2. Mr. Robison was on his way to work at a place that he described as "similar to home depot" and saw a poster that said "Uncle Sam wants you" so he pulled over and the recruiting sergeant walked up to him and talked to him. That day he had taken all the tests and by the end of the night he had left. That night he left to LAX. He hadn't told his parents, but he needed his mother's maiden name for his paperwork so he had called his father asking for it and the phone got handed to his mother. After asking why it was needed, he had told her that he was leaving to join the Army. She immediately bursted into tears. That

night he had his friends and current girlfriend come over to see him before they dropped him off in LA.

Mr. Robison was a 64B20 Heavy Vehicle Driver in the United States Army and trained in Ft. Polk, Louisiana for boot camp from July 14, 1965 through September 18, 1965. Then he trained in Ft. Ord, CA for truck driving from October 1965 till November 1965. He then trained to prepare for Vietnam in Ft. Campbell, KY from June 3, 1966 through September 1966 and was assigned to the 592nd transportation company. He was first stationed in Zweibrucken, Germany and was assigned to the 76th transportation company from December 1965 through May 1966 where he trained on and operated a 14 wheeler truck and trailer where convoys were ran throughout Germany and France delivering and picking up various items, some which were classified with MP's Military Police riding shotgun. Then, in Vietnam he had a primary mission to clear beaches of ammunition and he ran convoys to other LZ's that were in need of ammo. He also ran convoys delivering various items to other military bases in Texas, all along with being assigned to other transportation companies. He didn't really see combat, but periodically, he took fire on the convoy while on his runs, and for good luck, he had a kept with him a blessed necklace of St. Michael.

Through his journeys through the convoys and transportation companies, Mr. Robison made many friends while serving, both humans and animals. There was a guy that had found and kept a dog that had slept by him and she had ended up being pregnant. He wasn't sure what had happened to the dog and puppies afterwards. One of his partners/best friends was Albert Ochoa (Och). He calls him "the best partner a soldier could ask for." They were always with each other and they kept each other company. During their down time, for entertainment, they stole beer because beer was never issued in Vietnam, relaxed, and played poker. They were paid in Vietnam money, and when he got home, he had \$5000 in his bank and \$500 in his pocket from winning so often in poker when he would play with the other guys. Och had told him that he used to sing in a band back home, and Mr. Robison never believed him. After

getting stationed back home, he went to his bunk and Och was right next to him and got stationed by him. Then, he went home with him one time and met Och's family. They went to a bar where everybody knew him, so he stood up and sang some rock and roll songs, which was popular at the time, and that's when he realized his friend could actually sing and was astonished at the talent his friend had. . A few years ago he reconnected with Och and asked him if he ever pursued his singing career and he said "No, that was really my father's dream" and till this day, Mr. Robison has no idea how they got guitars in the middle of where they were stationed.

Mr. Robison takes great pride in what he has done for this country and says that his military experience was a good one, and says he would do it all over again. Mr. Robison kept a duffel bag, a jacket, and a blanket from Vietnam, but he threw away his uniforms. He was awarded a trophy for highest scores for written tests and physical tests in boot camp. After his time in service, he got his old job back and started reconnecting with his old friends. He started school in February of 1969 and got a football scholarship at Cal State Northridge. In 1971 he got a job with the city of Santa Fe Springs, and after 6 years he went to work for an insurance company and was there for 29 years. That's how he met his lovely wife, Gwen Robison. They have known each other for 35 years and have been married for 31. He still has his photos, friends, Vietnamese money, and a lot of good memories that he will carry with him forever.