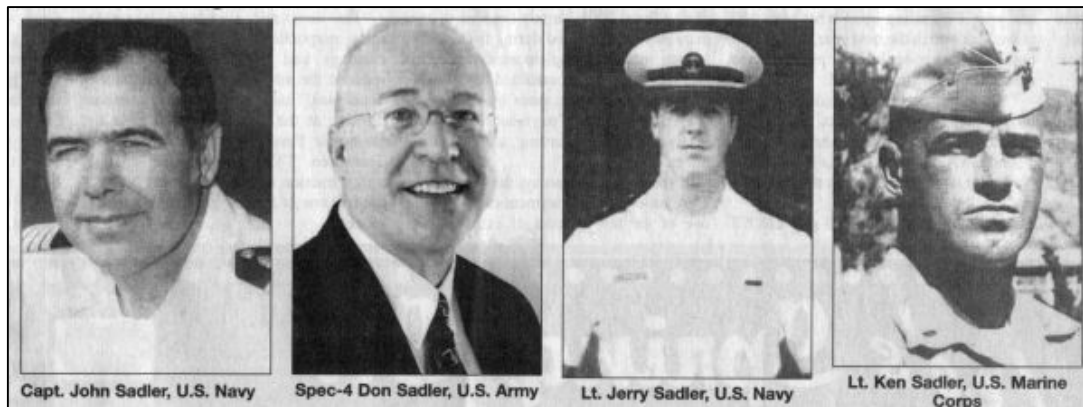


A BROTHERLY TRIBUTE FOR VETERANS DAY

By Gale Sadler Little

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COOKEVILLE: Veteran's Day, November 11, 2008. What is it? We Americans know it as a day that



was set aside in 1954 (originally 1919 as Armistice Day for World War I vets) to honor all veterans of the armed services. This includes the 2.9 million who have served and are serving their country today. However, there are many kinds of veterans as Webster's definition of a veteran is: "One having knowledge or ability gained through long experience..."

With Veteran's Day tomorrow, it seems like an appropriate time to share with readers some of the experiences of five veterans whom I know personally, my brothers, Capt. John Sadler, U. S. Navy; 1st Lt. Ken Sadler, U. s. Marines; SPEC-4 Don Sadler, U. S. Army; and 1st Lt. Jerry Sadler, Navy. My brother, David Sadler Sr., is not military veteran but he is certainly a veteran in the war against drug and alcohol abuse and addiction. Truly, he has won many battles, but the war is a never ending fight.

I begin with my brother, John, who is the oldest and had the longest military career. Captain John F. Sadler joined the Tennessee National Guard in 1952 and retired from the Navy in 1989, as a career officer and dentist. Capt. Sadler is one of the highest-ranking, longest-serving military persons from Overton County, to date. For a span of 37 years, John traveled the world over, receiving many honors and awards in recognition of his duty and service to his country.

Some of the honors John received are: Legion of Merit, Navy Unit Commendation with Combat V and a gold star in lieu of a second award. Combat Action Ribbon, navy Unit Commendation, Meritorious Unit Commendation, Navy Good Conduct Medal (enlisted medal), National Defense Service Medal with Bronze Star for second award, Vietnam Service Medal, Sea Service Deployment Medal, Vietnam Meritorious Unit Citation, Gallantry Cross Color with frame and palm, Vietnam Campaign Medal and the 45 Cal Pistol Ribbon (expert).

John had innumerable duty stations including a tour in Vietnam with the Marines. He served on two ships, a destroyer tender, USS Piedmont (AD-17) and an aircraft carrier, USS Coral Sea (CV-43).

An interesting story John told me occurred when he was transferred from Da Nang to Chu Lui in Vietnam. John's commanding officer asked him to deliver a dental crown for a patient that the original doctor was unable to perform. Without hesitation, Dr. Sadler agreed to do so. Upon entering the operating room, he met the patient on a huge sheet of plywood. The patient had been prepped and anesthetized and was waiting for the crown. John was shocked as he gazed upon his patient – a huge German Shepherd Sentry Dog.

The dog was making loud strange noises and John was most reluctant to go near the dog. He asked rather forcefully, "Are you sure that the dog is completely unaware of his treatment?" Being a dentist, naturally

John was fearful of sticking his hands in the mouth of a German Shepherd Sentry Dog that could possibly wake up and do damage to his hands. Dr. Sadler was assured that the dog would not wake up and he proceeded to insert the crown.

One of Capt. Sadler's fondest memories is when his youngest brother, the late Jeffery Sadler, joined the Navy. John had the honor of "swearing him in" at the Naval Recruiting Headquarters in Nashville. Since most of the Sadler family attended, the recruiters moved us to three different rooms before they could accommodate us. The Naval personnel on duty that day were shocked to see so many people in attendance just for a little ol' "swearin in."

Today, Dr. John Sadler lives in Seaback, Wash. with his wife, Anita. A great deal of John's time is spent raising, training and showing champion German Shepherd show dogs. John enters his dogs in competitions all over the northeastern U. S., where they have won many awards and honors. I wonder if John's love of dogs stems from that one dental crown he placed in that German Shepherd Sentry Dog's mouth so many years ago?

As stated earlier, my youngest brother, Jerry, also enlisted in the Navy. Although Jerry always wanted to be a pilot, he didn't get serious about it until he was 25 years old. Jerry began researching which branch of the military would be best to enter in order to become a pilot – the Air Force or the Navy? He discovered that the Navy was a better route to go BUT, a college degree was required because one had to go in as an officer before the age of 26. Subsequently, Jerry's degree requirements and his acceptance into the Navy as an officer had to be completed before he was 26 years old. Basically, he had to complete two years of college within one calendar year.

Jerry went to the department chairmen at TTU, showed them the number of hours that he had attained and asked: "What is the quickest way for me to get a college degree?" Jerry wound up in the Agricultural Department and was told that he could earn a B. S. degree within his time frame and, moreover, his participation on Tech's intramural rugby team would be greatly appreciated. Needless to say, the race was on and Jerry won. At one time, Jerry held the record for completing the highest numbers of hours per quarter by any student AND attaining the Dean's List for Academic Performance at the same time. Jerry graduated in May, 1984, with his degree and acceptance into Officer Training School, U.S. Navy. He turned 26 in June 1984.

Jerry's accomplishments as a pilot in the Navy were impressive. He completed four years of flight training and tactical proficiency in the anti-submarine warfare community. Jerry completed his qualifications in the world's foremost ASW aircraft, the Lockheed P-3 Orion. Lt. Sadler was awarded the Navy Achievement Medal for his role as the Squadron's Aviation Mine Warfare Officer. He successfully conducted a seven aircraft evolution which involved exact placing of 23 mines in the Charleston, S.C. Harbor. "This year's mining scores were the highest in three years and are a direct result of Lt. Sadler's initiative and dedication to excellence," stated VP-10's new commanding officer, James Carman, USN. After Lt. Sadler completed his tour of active duty, he remained in the Naval Reserves as a pilot.

Jerry was tenacious, determined, dedicated and possessed, basically, all of the characteristics of a high achiever and winner. He was in excellent physical condition and only 41 years old when diagnosed with cancer. Truly, it never occurred to any of us that he could not win his battle against cancer. Jerry fought valiantly and courageously but the ultimately lost that battle. He left a loving and devoted wife, Teresa Poindexter Sadler and three minor children, Rebecca, Alison and John Logan Sadler. Jerry will forever hold a very special place in our hearts and minds as we remember such an exceptional person whose life was cut short by an often devastating and incurable disease. Jerry was a pilot with Fed Ex at the time of his death, Veteran's Day, Nov. 11, 1999.

In 1955, my brother, Kenneth, graduated from Livingston Academy High School and entered the University of Tennessee on a football scholarship. He graduated from U. T. in 1960, with a B. S. degree in education. Ken was also a distinguished military ROTC student and, upon graduation, he accepted a commission as 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps. Lt. Sadler then attended Officer's Training School in Quantico, VA. He also played football for the Quantico Marine Team.

In 1961, Ken was sent to Okinawa in charge of Special Services and, while there, continued to play football for the Marines. When he returned to Camp Pendleton, Calif., he attended Embarkation School and became the Base Embarkation Officer of Camp Pendleton. From 1964 through 1965, Ken attended several schools such as Jungle Warfare School in the Panama Canal Zone, Escape and Evasion School in the High Sierras, as well as Mountain Climbing and Ski School.

When Lt. Sadler returned to Camp Pendleton, he was on the winning Camp Pendleton Rifle and Pistol Team. Lt. Sadler ended his career in the Marine Corps as a Rifle Company Commander.

My brother, SPEC-4 Don Sadler, enlisted in the U. S. Army for two years, 1971-1973. Shortly thereafter, Don became a finalist in the selection of 'hometown recruiter.' This was a program designed for new recruits who had just completed AIT (Advanced Individual Training). They were chosen for duty in their own hometowns to assist in local Army recruiting. After that assignment, Don spent the duration of his time in Germany.

Since leaving the Army and working for five years in Alaska, Don has spent much of his life as an educator, teacher, administrator and Vocational Director for Putnam County Schools. Most recently, Don was chosen as the Director of the Tennessee Technology Center in Crossville. Don's first loves are his daughter, Hannah, and his family. What many people do not know about Don is his second love, the fiddle. He is a very accomplished bluegrass musician and attends many bluegrass festivals as either a performer or listener.

My brother, David, was born in 1945, just after World War II ended. When he was old enough, David was summoned for physicals upon more than one occasion. Once he was classified 2F (I think in college). Another time he had a broken collar bone. The last time he came up for the draft, the War Department declined to draft him because he was important to the war effort since he was working at Uniroyal in Detroit.

For about 25 years, David made the kind of choices that had a negative impact on his life. When he was 41 years old, a few months after our dad died, David decided to "clean up his act." He entered Cumberland Heights for rehabilitation and attended 90 meetings in 90 days. David was truly fighting for his life in the hardest battle he would ever fight. In fact, it is a battle that so many others fight on a daily basis as well. When David was 45 years old, he returned to Tennessee Tech, earning a B. S. degree in education and a master's in counseling.

Today, David owns and operates Cumberland Plateau Recovery Centers in Overton, Putnam and Cumberland counties. The centers are dedicated to intensive outpatient treatment for drug and alcohol abuse and addiction by adolescents and adults. David will soon celebrate 23 years of sobriety and has devoted his time to helping others become and remain sober. He continues to attend meetings four or five nights per week. Truly, David is a "veteran in the war on drugs."

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The late Mary and John Sadler watch their oldest son, Capt. John Sadler, swear in their youngest son, Lt. Jerry Sadler.



The Sadler brothers (from left) Don, Jerry, John, Ken and David in Alaska.

Jerry Meadows Sadler Obt.

Funeral services for Mr. **Jerry Meadows Sadler**, 41, of Brentwood and formerly of Livingston, were conducted at 2 p.m. Sunday, November 14, 1999, from Livingston Church of Christ with Bro. Chris Coil and Bro. Glen McDoniel officiating. Burial with military honors by the Naval Reserve of Memphis was in **Rob Draper Memorial Cemetery** with Speck Funeral Home in charge of the arrangements. Mr. Sadler, a pilot for Federal Express, died Thursday, November 11, 1999, at his home. Born June 12, 1958, in Overton County, he was the **son of the late John Fowler and Mary Anderson Sadler**. He was a member of Livingston Church of Christ. He was lieutenant commander in the Naval Reserves, awarded the U.S. Navy Wings of Gold, and the recipient of two naval achievement medals. Survivors include his **wife, Teresa Poindexter Sadler**, Brentwood; **a son, John Logan Sadler**, Brentwood; **two daughters, Rebecca Sadler and Alison Sadler**, both of Brentwood; **four brothers, Dr. John Sadler**, Washington, **Kenneth Sadler**, Chattanooga, **David Sadler**, Livingston, and **Donnie Sadler**, Cookeville; **three sisters, Nan Sadler and Gale Little**, both of Cookeville, and **Dr. Diane Sadler**, Livingston; 19 nieces and nephews; and 15 great nieces and nephews. Pallbearers were Dr. John Sadler, Kenneth Sadler, David Sadler, Don Sadler, Dan Bartula, and Bob Stewart.

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