

Interviewee: Danny Moss
Interviewer: Dean Wetzel
May 8th, 2024
Battle Creek Michigan
Library of Congress Oral History Project

[00:00:00] **Dean Wetzel:** All right, Danny. Well, let me again just start off with just saying thank you for this today and being willing to sit down with me. I would like to start off with some very basic information, just like where were you born and was this the same place that you enlisted slash drafted from? And if not, where were you enlisted and drafted out of?

Danny Moss: Okay, I was born in Battle Creek, Michigan in December 1948. I attended elementary, junior high, and high school in Battle Creek, Michigan, and I, uh, enlisted in the United States Army in September of 1967. I, uh, went to Fort Wayne in Detroit, Michigan for induction, and from Fort Wayne I rode a train back to St. Louis. Got on a bus that took me to Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, where I took basic training in September. Actually, it was, yeah, September through November. And then in November, I got on a plane and I flew from St. Louis to Dulles in Washington and then on up to Boston to Logan Field. And I was picked up on a military bus and driven to Fort Devens, Massachusetts for my advanced individual training, which I was from, uh, December through June at Fort Devens. I was in the honor guard and our main functions were, uh, awards and decoration ceremonies for guys that had been overseas. And came back and, uh, then from Fort, uh, Devins or while I was at Fort Devins, my MOS school was Morse code, basic Morse code. And then I went to a high speed Morse code intercept school, graduated there in June of,

uh, 1967. June of 1968, excuse me, uh, while I was at, uh, while I was in base, or in at, uh, Morse Intercept School, Vietnam was really heating up, the Tet Offensive had occurred, and one of the motivators for our class was the, uh, instructors would tell us, well, if you don't pass this class, they're going to put you in the infantry and send you over for the Tet Offensive. So that was sort of a great motivator. From Fort Devens, I went to Turok Ranch, California. It was an Army Security Agency listening post, I guess you might call it, or station. And we did pre deployment training there copying Morse code. And in, uh, September of 68, I was sent to Vietnam from, uh, Turok Ranch, landed in Saigon. From Saigon, I went up to Nha Trang. And from Nha Trang, I went to my unit in the AmeriCal Division, which was the 328th Radio Research Company. And we were just attached to the three, to the, uh, AmeriCal division for, I guess they said, the administration of UCMJ, and so we could get paid. But other than that, we were still part of the Army Security Agency, and our tasks daily came down from NSA, the National, uh, National Security Agency. And they would send down, Our tasks, when we're copying code, they would send us, uh, frequencies, units we were copying, and any other thing they thought pregnant to help us achieve our missions. And while I, when I first got to, uh, Chu Lai, to the 328th, they didn't have a slot for me. So I was fortunate that Our commanding officer called me into the orderly room and he asked me, he says, uh, I was a PFC, he says, PFC Moss, I got a special assignment. Can you do it? And without knowing what it was, I said sure. So then he explained

to me that I would be working with a lieutenant or a captain and each morning we would go over to the AmeriCal division headquarters. And give the general staff a signal, a top secret signal intelligence briefing. And that was Monday through Sunday. And so I did that for, oh, I probably did that for, uh, close to two months. And then they, a radio position opened up and they needed me to come back to the company. sit radio position. Uh, while in that job briefing the general staff, Colin Powell was a major and he was the S3 for the AmeriCal division. And one day I, uh, lieutenant comes to our compound, rings our buzzer, I go out to meet him and he says, ask me where my boss was. And probably at the old club. So he says, get him, get him over to The dispensary or the hospital. We had a field hospital in Chu Lia. He says, get him over to the hospital. So I went over to the old club, got my boss and I took him over to the hospital. He asked me what was up. I says, I don't know. They told me to take you to the hospital. So then he checks in, finds out what's wrong. He says, go get captain. And I went to get the captain. So, I went and got the captain and found out that the general's helicopter had been shot down. The general, I think, had broken his leg or his ankle and Colin Prowl had broken his arm. And they were going to have to be put under anesthetics to get their bones set. And so, they had to have somebody in that room with a top-secret clearance in case they started muttering. Secrets while they were under Anastasia (anesthetic), they could write down what they were saying and then the people that were in the room doing the surgery or whatever they were doing were then sworn to secrecy

by those two guys, never to divulge what was said in that room. I was in the AmeriCal for about 15 months. I. Spent some time on a LZ, called LZ West, with the 196th Infantry Brigade. Uh, set up a listening post out there with a, uh, linguist, a Vietnamese linguist. And he and I, uh, were out there for, I was out there for about five weeks. And then I had to go back in the set position again. And, um, we would, uh, I didn't have anything to do but keep him company and take his information in, because the information that I was picking up, I would just go over to the TOC, get on a secure frequency, and radio back to the company. Hey, I got this guy on this frequency. It's at this time. You got somebody can copy him, and they would do that. But the linguist, he could actually. He was actually copying what the Vietnamese were saying and recording it. And then if it got real hot, he would say, Hey, you got to go get on there, call the company and tell them we got this. And so they would have one of the linguists in the company get on that frequency that he had given me. And he would listen to it and that would be passed on to division. So after I, uh, got done with that assignment, I went back to the company and while out on L, oh, while out on LZ West, things got a little hot. The, uh, 2nd NVA Division had said they were going to push the, uh, 19, that battalion of the 196 back out into the, uh, ocean. We were 3 miles from the coast. And, so, uh, To help us out at night especially, there was Puff the Magic Dragon. He would do a few orbits around the LZ and light up the countryside. And then during the daylight hours, there was the New Jersey sitting, uh, I think he could only come in to two and a

half miles because of the depth of the water. And then we were just about the end of the gun line. He was firing in 16 miles. So, and they had a 20-mile range, so that didn't leave much room for error. But that was fascinating to watch the New Jersey watch, uh, out and the watch puff work out. So, when that, uh, by the time that assignment ended. In my first 15 months in country, I was, uh, I had made, uh, E-5. And I decided I wanted to go to Aviation Unit. And what our Aviation Units did, they copied, copied messages. But what I like best, they, we flew around and we fixed enemy radio terminals. And then we would pass that information on to the, uh, And, the main mission that I, my unit flew, we flew the Ashaw Valley from Phu Bai out to, uh, the Laotian border, and then we would go north along the Vietnamese Laotian border, and every now and then we would get a wing tip in the North Vietnam, and, That could be hazardous to your health. So we didn't do that too much, but we would venture into the DMZ. And, uh, I did that for 14 months and I had one month left in country when we had a plane went up with five guys, they were doing intercept and direction finding. Both that that was their capability. I, I had qualified for that, but I couldn't fly that period because I didn't have flight orders. So they went up and for reasons only been known now, I guess, to God, they got too far in the North Vietnam and they got shot down and their remains were never recovered. So I say I had, uh, Month left in country flew one more day after they got shot down and we weren't copying much code. We were trying to see if we could find a crash site inside north inside South Vietnam. We saw a couple sites where there

were fires, but then we got down to probably about 3000 ft. That was the lowest. We weren't supposed to be that low, but we were chance and things. And we saw fires and they had been crash sites from helicopters going in to try to pick the, uh, North Viet, or the South Vietnamese up because there, we had a big mission at that time where we had reopened a Marine fire base called Khe Sanh and from that fire base, the South Vietnamese. We're supposed to go in, enter the Ho Chi Minh Trail and cut off the supplies. Everything went good the first two weeks and after the first two weeks all hell broke loose. The South Vietnamese got their asses handed to them. We lost a lot of helicopters and it was just ill planned operation. And in 1969, I think it was May, 1969, maybe it was 1970, the 101st was out in the Ashaw Valley and they were on a hill called, and it became known as the Battle of Hamburger Hill. We fought out, they fought out there I think for about three weeks. And they fought some pitch battles. And at the end of three weeks, they, it was so tight out there. Like there's that was with Khe Sanh, we were dropping, had B 52s making airstrikes, what they call danger close to, uh, keep the 101st from getting pushed off that LZ. But. The NVA were already inside of that, so they couldn't retreat. So they just kept fighting. And then one night it got deathly quiet, I'm told, and they quit fighting. And that morning, the 101st took the hill. We stayed out, they stayed out there on that hill for two weeks, and then we gave the hill up. I think we lost probably 240 guys from the 101st and you know, just to give it up. After we pulled off the hill, they could watch us. They watched us pull off the hill and

they came back to Hamburger Hill. But, uh, that was pretty memorable. And then, because I had to try to fix targets out there. And then there was another one called, uh, The 101st had a LZ out in the Ashaw Valley called LZ Ripcord. And they had a battalion out there. And they were giving the North Vietnamese more than they wanted. So the North Vietnamese decided they were going to kick the 101st off of LZ Ripcord. And it was, It was another, it wasn't as bloody as, uh, hamburger Hill, but there was some serious fighting going on out there. And, that was, I think that I recall maybe the second closest I come to getting killed over there because we were out doing fixes and things got slow. So the pilot in our plane said. I'm gonna go in for a closer look. So he dropped down and I had a, the ability to look at the ground through an old World War II bomb site. That's how we updated our navigational system. So I'm looking at the ground and I could roll my, uh, device out to the wingtips and out to the nose of the plane. So I had seen a jet. off in the distance. So I'm following with my eyes. Then I roll my bombsite out to the end of the wingtip and I'm following the jet and I see him come in to make a napalm run. And so I told the pilot, I says, hey, sir, I said, you gotta break right. I says, uh, a, I think it was A-Seven, a dropped the load and he's coming right up under us. I know he don't see us. We broke right and I could see this. It was, I never forget it was, uh, Colonel was flying that plane because I could see his silver wings on his helmet as he was, as he went past vertical and we're going the other way and that, that stopped my heart. But after that, that was my last day flying. I think close to my last day flying.

Cause my last day was the day after we went out and tried to find our airplane that we couldn't find, got, uh, then I got, uh, orders when I got back. They say, Hey, you've Orders to go home came in. I says, good. So I got, went back down to Saigon. And one night I was down there for about, uh, well, there's a couple of story. One, I'll tell you when you get short, sometimes you're, you get obnoxious. So, I would, I was short, didn't have anything to do in the company. I'd come in. Signed all my papers and I was just sleeping there at night Going out and raising hell the next evening so I went over to the enlisted club and had a few so we hadn't had hot water for six weeks in the company. So I go back to the company Yes, and I said i'm gonna take a shower man. I smell bad So I got my towel and my soap And I went to the shower and I got under that water and it felt so nice and warm. I got that shower and I went back to my hooch and I says, Hey guys, you better hurry up. We got warm. We got hot water. So, six guys in the hooch jump up, grab their towels and everything and they run to the shower. And then I hear these profanities directed in my direction. And they come back and they said, that water was ice cold. I says, it was hot to me guys. I'm sorry. And so I got down to, so then a couple of days later I went on down to Saigon to process out of the battalion, out of the group. And I'm walking down the street one afternoon and I hear somebody say, hey Moss. And I didn't pay any attention. He says, hey Moss. And I turned around and it was one of my instructors from Basic Morse Code at Fort, at Fort Devens. He was a Green Beret and he had got his 12 months in, and he was going home. So, he says

come on to the club, I'll buy you a beer, drink with you. Now you're not a slick sleeved nobody. So we went over to the club, had a couple beers and then we left Vietnam a couple days later. And when I got home, I got to Oakland and they said, you know, you guys don't get in trouble because for 48 hours you're still under subject to the UCMJ. So, I and a guy from New Mexico, we buddied up on the plane and so when we got out, they paid us cash. They gave us cash. I had about 3, 000 because I hadn't been paid in over, in almost two months and I had back pay from that and I had accumulated leave pay. So we get let out on the streets Outside the gate at 2 in the morning and we catch a cab and the cab driver says hey, I know where the action is You And we said, we do, too, at the Ramada Inn. And that's where we want to go. So we went to the Ramada Inn, spent the night, and got up the next morning, went to, uh, San Francisco Airport. And I got on a plane, flew back to Battle Creek. And at the time, well, I flew to Chicago, and then flew on to Battle Creek, because Battle Creek had, uh, I think it was North Central was servicing Battle Creek out of Chicago. So my dad picked me up and I got home. My mother couldn't believe it. That was the end of my military career.

[00:22:05] Dean Wetzel: Awesome. Well, thank you for that. Um, so I have a, you mentioned Puff. Yes. I cannot imagine that being a, uh, a military. definitional code, or an actual word. So where did that come from? Do you know?

Danny Moss: Well, he could, it, it, it was a C-47. This was before the AC 130s.

Okay. And it was a C 47. He had two miniguns.

Dean Wetzel: Okay.

Danny Moss: And when it shot rounds out, it, uh, they said it looked like a dragon's tongue. And you know, Puff the Magic Dragon. So that's where Puff came from.

Dean Wetzel: Uh, I guess that fits. It works.

Danny Moss: Yep. That worked.

Dean Wetzel: And never wanted Puff against you though.

Danny Moss: No, no. Cause you saw that. And it looked like you could just walk from the plane to the ground because every fifth round was a tracer and he's shooting ungodly number of rounds.

Dean Wetzel: Something like, I think it's three, I think the minigun now shoots 3, 000 rounds.

Danny Moss: Yeah, and Puff was shooting about 1, 000 to 1, 500, and he had two guns, so.

[00:23:18] **Dean Wetzel:** Yeah, oh. Yeah. Um, now when you were talking about Hamburger Hill, I could see it a little bit in your face. It looked like that was an angry moment for you. Were you upset with how that went down?

Danny Moss: I, at the end, yes. I was upset because, as in a lot of things in Vietnam, We had, we had won the battle, we had won the war and we give up. You know, we, the, the people, uh, newspapers were writing about how bad it was. And so then the American people would say, well, it's not worth it. So we've lost 200 plus guys. And then we give up, you know, because people are getting tired. And the, uh, newspapers weren't treating us fair. They, uh, they were talking about, uh, there was the, when I was in, uh, Chu Lai, there was the My Lai incident. And My Lai was when, uh, one of the units of the Ameri Cal had went in and murdered a bunch of civilians. And the helicopter pilot had discovered it, and so he called it in, and from there it got to the newspapers. The only guy that actually got punished was a lowly second lieutenant named Lieutenant Calley. You know, and we always said that, you know, Lieutenant Calley would not have ordered that on his own, but at the time, uh, Saigon was wanting body count. And they didn't say. friend or foe, they wanted body count and My lai, uh, at unit that had, uh, cause had gotten involved down there had been, uh, they would go in or they'd go out on a patrol and they were walking on a lot of booby traps and then they'd get near that village and kids would come out to sell them Cokes. And the NVA, they were ruthless, you know. They'd give the kid a grenade and pull the pin. And when the kid got out there,

he was supposed to drop the grenade and run. But kids can't outrun grenade fragmentation. And he'd take two or three GIs with him. And he'd go too. And the guys, I'm sure, had gotten fed up with that. And so, they said, here's our chance to get even with some of that. And so that's that's how we had My Lai.

Dean Wetzel: Well, another moment that you were talking about, um, was the, was that down craft right before you got out, right before you got sent home. Um, what was it that made that one? Cause I can't imagine that was the only crash site that you guys had?

[00:26:20] Danny Moss: In the 15 months I was in the, in that aviation unit, that was our only crash.

Dean Wetzel: Okay.

Danny Moss: And, uh, the next day, the people where we were working out of their building, they were copying code. And they had, uh, copied a message from a North Vietnamese Air Artillery Unit that said they had shot down a plane. And just so happened that particular day. The only plane reported lost in South Vietnam was ours. And it was ended up being in North Vietnam and we could never figure out why it ended up being in North Vietnam other we there was speculation that well they were caught headed kind of north and they got hit with a missile and They didn't have any flight controls or the Pilot. Some of those pilots, you know, we would get the pilots in and they would have went

through flight school and stuff but some of them we always speculated might have worked for other government agencies. Like the CIA, and maybe that pilot was told that you know I want we want you to see how close you can get to drawing fire and he got too close and he killed five guys, so, you know, we'll never know that because we, I had, we had been out 30 years or no, we had been out about 10 years and, uh, we're, we had started writing letters to the department of the Army to try to find out if anyone knew why that plane got shot down where it did, nobody knew. So, What was told to us was, you know, after 20 years the Department of the Army will declassify that and you can find out. So then after 20 years, the internet was coming into being and we got, the guys got together, and we said we'll have a reunion and we planned it on the internet. One of the guys lived in Baltimore, and so he set up the hotel, that's where we stayed. And we had had four guys, I still got the letter I wrote to the Department of the Army. We had had four other guys wrote, including a warrant officer. And they said, that's still classified. And I had, in Battle Creek, Dr. uh, Joe Schwartz. He had been a, uh, representative. And then in Vietnam, he was a naval officer and he had worked for the other guy for the CIA. So I ran into him at the shoeshine shop one day and I says, Doc, I wonder if you can help me out. He says, What do you got? And I told him I gave him the aircraft tail number. The day that got shot the time It got shot down as far as we could tell from enemy radio messages. And so we said, I said, you know, we're just trying to find out why that plane was where it was because it wasn't supposed to be there.

So I ran into Doc probably maybe six weeks later. And he says, I got some bad news for you. I said, what's, what is it, Doc? And he said, the guys that are still there that I got had have contact with said, just forget it. Yeah. And that, you know, that was another hot button. Just forget it, you know. Five guys, you know why they were there, but just forget it. Don't tell their buddies nothing. Just, just forget it, you know.

Dean Wetzel: I'm sure that's really hard.

Danny Moss: Yeah, that was, that was, that was, that was tough. But that reunion we had, that first reunion, we, uh, the guy that lived in Baltimore, Was a member of, uh, I don't know if it was the American Legion or the DAV, but he was a member and he knew a trumpet player or bugle player. So he hired out the bugle player and we went down to the wall on a, on a day trip. And, uh, it was probably, this is in June, And it's probably 95 degrees note shade. I mean, it was smoking down on the wall, on the mall. And so, you know, we're walking along, looking at the wall, we find our guys, do our etchings. And then, uh, the bugler hit that first note of taps. And it got so quiet, you could hear a dime drop. And that's when the tears started to flow. And the wives were with us. You know, they said, what's wrong? And we said, you know, It's just we've never been able to really express. And I mean, my wife said, I've never seen him like this. And so then we walked on back to the bus. And as we're walking along, if you look at the base of the wall, there's all this memorabilia, a lot of pictures. Because I

was talking to one guy there, he was from the 101st, he had been on LZ Ripcord, and he said, well, all the memorabilia at the end of, end of every day, we take it, we have to take it away, because, you know, it just overwhelmed the place. So, I saw this one guy's picture, and I said, wow. I said, boy, these guys were young. And then I said, that was us. Yeah. So that's my, that's my story.

Dean Wetzel: Yeah. I've, uh, I broke down when my wife's grandfather died. He was a, a veteran and he had the flag folded and I was good up until the flag folding. And that's where I lost it. My wife looked at me and said the same thing, what's wrong? And I was like, you just, you just can't understand cause it's seeing that or hearing taps. We know what that is.

Danny Moss: Yeah. Taps.

Dean Wetzel: You know, once makes my hair stand up.

Danny Moss: The way I, I, I, somebody said, well, what does taps mean? I says, taps means it's final. Yeah. Yeah. It's over. It's over.

Dean Wetzel: Yeah. Well, moving on to a little bit, uh, a little bit lighter of a subject. Were you the only member in your family to ever serve? I mean, I know you said you were born in 48, so immediately I think, was your dad in World War II?

Danny Moss: Yes, my dad was in World War II.

Dean Wetzel: Okay. Did you have a grandfather in World War I?

Danny Moss: Not to my knowledge.

Dean Wetzel: Okay.

Danny Moss: I had a dad and I had two uncles in World War II. Alright. And, uh, 'cause when I decided. to go. My dad said, well, decision's yours son. I says, yeah, I says they're going to get me one way or the other. So might as well be sort of on my terms, I guess. So that's why I went on and enlisted.

Dean Wetzel: Okay. Well, I guess that kind of answers my next question is to like, what was your family's reaction? Because again, the Vietnam, I can only imagine is maybe more your mother than your dad would have been like, no, you're not going. I don't want you going.

Danny Moss: Mother didn't want me to go, but Dad said, you got, he's got, he's gotta be a man. He's gotta do what he's gotta do.

Dean Wetzel: Yeah. A veteran talking right there. Yeah. Type thing. I mean, what are you gonna do when a guy's fought either the Japanese or the Nazis, right?

Danny Moss: Yeah. Like yeah, he was in Germany. Okay. And, uh, we talked about it a little bit and when wa when he was in the military, the only, basically

the only jobs that African Americans could do was motor pool transportation. And he was part of that Red Ball Express, you know, and so I felt kind of, I guess kind of proud, I want to say, that I could be in the Army Security Agency and have a top secret clearance, you know, whereas all he could do was drive a truck, and he was a lot smarter than just driving a truck. Yeah,

Dean Wetzel: so Now were you drafted slash enlisted right out of high school, or what was the like the level of education?

[00:36:14] **Danny Moss:** Okay, I Graduated from high school in June of 66 And I was working at Meijer supermarket. It was out in the urban El plaza We're family fair is now and so I worked something, and I hired in the Post in June of 67 Because in 66 I wasn't old enough. I was only 17 you had to be 18 to work at post so I hired in the post and then I worked till September of 67 and Meyers and post and I took military leave To go into service and, uh, because I was going to get drafted because I had, uh, dropped out of college and lost my deferment and the lady said, well, you know where you're going. And we had a, we had a lady at the draft board. I think that lady had to be one of the meanest people I'd ever seen because there was a guy I went down there. I was down there and I was in line and he was yelling and screaming and she come, come from behind the desk and she had a cane and she's shaking that cane and says, Sonny, you know where you'll be then the next month. Guaranteed. So he was getting, he wore his welcome out. He was going. So that was kind of funny, but

it was to me because and then after you get, like, after you get to Vietnam, things, you know, after you're there a while, some type of things get kind of morbid, cause I saw, I was in the Nang when I was in the aviation unit, and, uh, I think it was C, I think they called it the C 141. It was a big military jet transport that they used to ferry wounded back to either Japan Philippines or the States, you know, and that plane landed with some kind of emergency. They dropped the bag door and here's guys on wheelchairs and crutches You know and guys are sitting around boy. I hope they make it look at him. Go look at him go That's why I say, you know after a while, you know your attitude gets kind of morbid it seems like And that, that, that was kind of funny. It was funny, but it wasn't funny.

Dean Wetzel: Just your own way of like, coping with. Yeah. I, I still have issues with some, my, my level of humor is very dark. You know, a lot of my friends. Sometimes, yeah. My friends are like, why are you laughing at that? And I'm just like, well, you haven't been in the Marine Corps, so.

Danny Moss: No.

Dean Wetzel: Um. So you were in the Army, obviously, uh, but did you evaluate other branches or were you just like, the Army, because my dad, like, there's a family line here and I gotta go that way?

[00:38:53] **Danny Moss:** Well, I went to the Army because he was, actually, he was the first one that saw me after I come out of the draft board, and I knew I wasn't going to the Marine Corps, and I thought the uh, Air Force and the Navy. We're a bunch of wimps. Yeah, because after basic, you know, we started talking about, or after I got to Vietnam, we said, boy, boy, I don't know, Marines, they can take anything, but they can't hold nothing. You know, and I remember one time I was over in the TOC and the guys were laughing at the Marines. They said, um, and I said, um, A Marine helicopter went out to pick up this prisoner that the Marines had captured. And so, the prisoner and two, I guess it was three prisoners and the Marine get on the helicopter and they're coming back to the base. And so they asked the guy, who's your commander? And the way the story goes, I don't know how much truth you can put into it. Because one guy ended up telling me, he said, well, we were only 20 foot off the ground. He says, the guy didn't talk, so the Marine shoved him out the helicopter. So, the next guy that, you know, interrogating him, and he wouldn't talk, they shove him out. And so then by then the third guy says, I don't want to go out. So when they ask him, he says, telling them they already shoved him out the helicopter. But I, I had heard, I heard that story and then I heard later on that they were only about 20 foot off the ground, but I can imagine you're blindfolded, you know, 20 foot,

Dean: Wetzel: going to feel like a long time.

[00:40:57] **Danny Moss:** Yeah. I could feel like a real long time.

Dean Wetzel: Yeah, there's always going to be a little bit of truth because it is the Marines. If there's any branch that's going to do something crazy like that, it's going to be the Marines. Let's be honest. Uh, Okay, um, So let's, let's break down a little bit of like, what was basic training like? Just, just basic training and then we'll, we'll look at your other school as well. But like, what were some of the things that they trained you up on? Like, what, what did you do in basic training?

Danny Moss: Basic training, did a lot of marching. Uh, then we got familiar. At the time, M14 was the battle rifle. We got real familiar with the M14.

(This was a not relevant conversation about the noise heard in the back ground. That's my generator. No, you're good. We got real familiar with the, uh, What's today? May 8th. I mean, this is Thursday, right? Wednesday. Wednesday, okay, that's, yeah. Is that why it kicks on? Yeah, it checks itself for five minutes.)

[00:42:12] **Danny Moss:** So, uh, we, uh, we did a lot of marching, close order drills, uh, uniform code of military justice. We learned our chain of command and that sort of stuff. We went on Bivouac. That was our overnight stay where we pitched our tent. We marched to the bivouac, pitched our tents, spent the night, got up, broke camp, and then marched some more, and we were marching, um, in Fort Leonard. And so one of the guys asked the sergeant, he says, serge, how much further do we got to go?

[00:42:41] **Dean Wetzel**: And he says, just over the next hill.

Danny Moss: It's always over the next hill. And it don't seem like we got to the next hill for an awful long time. It was one hill after another hill. So then, uh, After, uh, we got back from Bivouac, Uh, they selected guys that, uh, They thought had an aptitude to be a truck driver. And they said I didn't have an aptitude to be a truck driver, but when I got to Vietnam, I got a driver's license. I could drive anything from a jeep to a 2. 5-ton. And that's what they put on my license. So that's what I could drive. And basic after basic, when I went to Fort Devens, there was a Battle Creek guy, he was the CQ when we signed into Fort Devens. And he uh, told us, he says, Hey Battle Creek, I'll take care of you. I said, okay. He says, if you don't like KP, join the Honor Guard. So I said, what do they do? He says, uh, they go into the little bergs for parades and they do awards and decorations, parades here on post. I said, okay. I joined the Honor Guard, which before we got there, it had been pre OCS. They still carried on a lot of the B. S. As far as the spit shine boots and breaking starch. You'd have an in ranks inspection. And they'd, uh, Go around looking under your collar for threads, and that's how you, that's how they got the duty roster for the weekend. Too many guys get, if you got too many gigs, you're gonna be in CQ for the weekend. And, uh, I was, I was a pretty sharp troop, so I never got CQ on the weekend. Cause I remember one morning, it was about like, We're in Ranks. We're in formation and we got our Ranks inspection to see who's going to be on duty. And so the guy walks down, I'm in the second row, he walks down the first

row. I'm in the second row. He comes down, he gets to me and he squints a little bit. And he says, damn moss. And he goes out and I wanted to laugh, but I know I'd get duty if I did. Cause he had looked at my boots and you could shave. I had my boots so shiny and I didn't use John Gluco. It was all spit shine. I had my boots shiny. And so I prided myself in that. And then when I was. Leaving the honor guard, I spent, I think I spent a week in the company and I went over to the PX and this guy says, you know, when you were in the honor guard, I was good. I thought about stepping on your toe. I says, I'm glad you just thought about it because you saved yourself a good ass whoop. Because my boots are neat.

Dean Wetzel: I'm sure that took time to get those to shine.

Danny Moss: Yeah. Yeah. And then when I heard Sarge was going to put me on CQ for front inspection, I was probably putting in an extra hour that night. I did go to bed at about 1 o'clock, making sure no strings on my uniform. Boots were in a high state of gloss.

Dean Wetzel: Um, all right, so we'll go, we'll, we'll jump back. We'll go back to Vietnam real quick. Um, now being a Morris code operator, um, I could be a little naive with this, but I, I don't know much about this particular job that you were doing. So could you explain like, kind of like the daily workload and then. How did you feel like doing this? Cause obviously I'm, I'm guessing taking in messages couldn't always be great messages coming in and that, um, so did that

ever like affect you? And then like, how would you deal with like a bad day at the office? If you received something horrible or something?

Danny Moss: Sometimes it did affect me and what affected me was I'd say 90 percent of our messages, we were just copying them, and we'd pass them on to somebody that could break them out. The 10 percent that could be broken out, the message had what we call a preamble, the start of the message. It would say like, message 100, uh, and then a couple characters later it'd give the date, the time, and then you'd get a message 11, a 22, or 33. And those could be, those are almost like plain text. And you would call somebody from the traffic, we called them TA's, Traffic Analysis Analysts. You'd call Traffic Analysts and he'd come in and as you were typing the message, he's reading it out. There's a warrant officer over his shoulder and he's copying it all down and he's called for the jeep to take him over to the TOC. You know, so he could pass it on. And, uh, At first, you know, it was great to get a message like that, because, you know, you get a chance. I was, uh, like a feather in your cap and might help you get promoted, you know. But then after you've been there a while and you see how some of the things are run, and you've been out and talking to some of the grunts about how they get used for cannon fodder. You don't want to get those messages because that means that the higher headquarters is going to put in ground assault on those and you don't want to be the one that they have sent in a squad or a reinforced squad into what the message came out as you know, they just got a squad that you're going up against and come to find out those guys have walked

into a company or bigger. You know, 18 guys against a company, that's, that's not good odds because you got 18 guys, you might have two, usually you got two machine guns and two, uh, M79 launchers, but still, if you're walking in against a company at Vietnamese Co North, but me, a North Vietnamese company was usually about 60 guys, you know? And 18 against 60, you gotta be doing hell of a shooting to

Dean Wetzel: it's three to one. Yeah. Odds. Yeah. We like that in the other way. Yeah.

Danny Moss: And then, you know, it might not be a company you might be walking into battalion.

Dean Wetzel: A battalion.

[00:49:59] **Danny Moss:** Yeah. You know? And you don't want guys doing that. That's the way it was copying the code every day. You know, you copy it. And then at the end of the day, you're glad your day was over and you go to the club. But then when I got to aviation, we would be fixing targets and you get a target 500 meters or less. Two 50 was the best we could get. And that was considered 500 to 250 to 500 was considered a visual. And we get a fix that tight, you know they're going to put troops in on it. Because they want to try to find the radio terminal. They want to capture the radio operator, or whoever else is around there. But then, you know, you get to thinking, oh man, what if these guys are

walking into a big base camp, and they only got. A squad or a company, you know. You didn't like, you got to the point you didn't like those. Those fixes were good. They were good for your, for your morale. But, you know, after a while you'd say, Nah, I don't want to get in anymore. You know, cause, you know, if you got 500 to 750, they were going to, uh, send in an airstrike. Okay, uh, you know. Bomb them into the stone age, but don't send troops.

[00:51:28] **Dean Wetzel:** You almost feel responsible then. You know.

Danny Moss: Yeah. Because I was, uh, talking, we, I was, my, my high school wrestling team won the state championship. My senior year. First one ever. And, I was talking to my, uh, Assistant coach, he was my English teacher too. And I was talking to him, we had a reunion, wrestling team reunion. And I said, Coach, you know, and I've conveyed it to the, to the B. A. when I go out to metal maintenance. And I said, you know, I said, you know, I look back, and what I miss the most is I never had a chance to grow up. I was 18. I'm in Vietnam. And I'm in charge of people. Or I got a responsibility for people. I'm copying the code and, you know, passing the messages and stuff. And, uh, I'm responsible for a grunt that might walk into something if I, if I miss it. Or If I have it right, and the army misses it, might get a guy, might get some guys killed, I said. And then, after that, you know, I got to be a sergeant, and then I'm responsible for the radio band. Those guys, they could, uh, if the first sergeant pissed them off, they would develop selective hearing. So they're sitting there

and you go by and you say, Hey, you don't have somebody, you don't have the guy up all Sarge, I got a bad earache today, you know? And he said, Oh man, you know, but you might miss something.] So, man, I got a bad earache today, you know, you know, he don't have an earache. He's pissed off at the first Sergeant. So he's not going to do his job. And that, that would upset me. And then I said, I told the coach, I said, you know, when I got out of the service, I went to work and I get promoted to a supervisor. And, you know, you're in charge of a multi-million dollar operation. You're responsible for the people that have jobs to do. I said, never got a chance to grow up. Because I'd be talking to guys that didn't go, and they'd tell me how much fun they were having back here, and I said, oh, well. I said, I had fun too. I went to Thailand. Because I, I remember I was in Thailand. I went to a place that was sort of like, you ever go to Binder Park Zoo? You ever been out there?

Dean Wetzel: Yeah.

Danny Moss: Well, they had a place in Thailand called Tim Land. And it was sort of like Binder Park Zoo. Some of the, uh, uh, uh, uh, I don't know the functions, subject to, but they had everything. You could see a lot of the stuff. You could see them working bronze and you could see, uh, the women knitting and weaving, see elephants moving logs and stuff like that. And so, there was a guy there, he had, I think, what's smaller, a Python or a Constrictor?

[00:55:09] **Dean Wetzel:** A constrictor?

Danny Moss: Yeah, I think, I think it was a boa constrictor. He had a, he was about six foot. And, uh, he had it there. So this lady I had with me, she said, You want a picture? I said, Yeah! So, I got a snake here, she's here, the rest of the snake is over here. So, I sent that picture home to my mother. My dad, she said, she said you know, uh, my son got over there and lost his mind. And I showed it to, uh, one of, one of my buddies. He was, uh, he and I meet down at, uh, you, you interviewed him, uh, Gene Gillette. I showed it to Gene, and he says, whoa, don't show me that. Yeah. Yeah.

(The wife of Danny Moss entered the room, I thought y'all was gone. No, we just chicken chatting.)

Danny Moss: And I showed that to Gene. He shook, he says, Oh, no. But I was telling him, I said, One time, the hill I was out on, We'd hear screeching up in the ceiling at night. We didn't know what it was, so I said, I was over to the toc, and I asked the guy what it was. And he said, It's probably a snake up there killing rats. I said, Okay. I don't like rats, so the snake is doing his job. So, but I got back to the bunk, our bunker, and it was, my buddy was standing outside the liny I was out there with, and I said, Steve, what are you doing out in the rain, man? He says, man, the biggest fucking snake in the world is in our bunker. I said, Oh yeah, where is he? And I looked in and he was over in the corner. So, I went out in the bunker and I got on one. Went into the bunker, and I said, Steve, you coming in? He said, not as long as that snake's in there. I said, okay. So

Steve stood out in the rain for probably three hours till it quit. But I'm sitting there, got my legs crossed, got my M16 over my lap, and I'm sleeping with one eye open. And Steve said, well, if you shoot, it's probably gonna ricochet. I says, I'll get the snake Though. But yeah, I said, I'm not staying out in the rain. So then it quit raining and the snake just slithered on back up into the, we had a layer of PSP, sand, uh, and then between the sand, there was sandbags. So he slid up between the PSP and the sandbags, I guess. He was happy. He was dry again. And we were, I was happy.

Dean Wetzel: Um, so how do you think your time in Vietnam changed you as a person and do you think this was a good change? Uh, you know, I never really thought of it too much, but I think how it changed me as a person is,

[00:58:22] **Danny Moss:** uh, it showed me that I was really a responsible person, that I cared about people. I sort of developed my character a lot, that I cared about people. And, uh, I like, always like to see the job get done, but have it get done right. And it taught me that if you treat people fairly, they'll work for you. I had that in Vietnam, and then when I got to be a supervisor at POST, Uh, my first boss, the guy that made me a supervisor, he says, you know, he says, you're hardest. Job is gonna be treating people right. He says you can't treat everybody the same, but you gotta treat the people right. He says you'll, you'll, he says you'll, you'll quickly find out who the slackers are. We call them the 5

percenters, the ones you gotta spend 95 percent of your time is spent with 5 percent of the people because whatever reason they don't want to work.

Dean Wetzel: Um, I've heard it both ways when it comes to making friendships in some place like Vietnam. So, for you, did you, did you develop friendships or were you someone that was like, you know, the turnover rate is so rapidly high that I don't want to expose myself? And did you find your way to like, kind of like recluse?

Danny Moss: Okay, well, in my unit, Our, basically our only turnover rate was guys that were de-roasting, or ETSing, you know. So, yeah, you made friends. But I, I could understand it in a line unit, you know, where, you know, a new guy goes out and gets it the first or second day. And I'd hear the guys come back, yeah, well so and so guy got it, but who was that? Oh, I don't know, some FNG. Those guys never really got close to the guy, I'm sure. But when I was over there, the first guy I ran into I grew up with. And that was when I landed in Saigon. We stayed in this hotel in downtown Saigon in the Chinese section. It was called Cholan, the Chinese section. I ran into a guy I'd grown up with, and he was a security guard downtown. And I says, how'd you get this job? And he said, man, he said, I've been humping the bush for 10 months. One morning he says, my platoon sergeant come in and I said, Pully, they got an opening for a security guard downtown. And he said, he probably left half his stuff in this hooch getting out of there. And so then I ran into him. And then when I got up

to Chu Lia, It was just before Christmas in 1968, and I'm walking down the street, and I see this guy, and he's ahead of me. And I look at him, and I said, Wow, I didn't know two guys walked like that. And I says, Hey, Fred Brown. He kept walking. So I said, Fred Brown. He kept walking, and I put on a little trot, and I got up, and I said, Fred! And I said, Fred! And he turned around and he was my next door neighbor. And he was coming home. His time was up and I still had, this was in December, so I still had nine months to go. And so, I says, what are you doing? He says, man, I'm going home. I says, okay. I says, where are you staying at? He says, oh, he says, I got a cot over in our replacement unit. I said, what are you doing with your pack? He said, you can't leave anything over there. Somebody will take your stuff. I said, okay. I said, well, I'll tell you what. I said, I got an extra space in my hooch. Why don't you come over and flop there for a couple nights? You know, your stuff will be okay. And so he did. So we went to see the Bob Hope show in December of 68. In the rain in Chu lai. And then, uh, when I got up to Fubi, I signed up for R& R. And before I was processing out for R& R, and I run into this guy, the R& R clerk. I went through junior high and high school with him. He says, I'll take care of you. I'll get you a good seat on the plane. I says, yeah, okay. So, then after I got out, I ran into him. And then, uh, when I got back and then I was getting ready to leave the unit to go to the aviation unit and the mail clerk, I went to mail call and he says, Hey, there's another guy from Battle Creek here. I said, Oh yeah. And he told me his name. I said, No, I don't know him, but I looked him up. And he asked

me, he says, Well, when you get home, call my parents and tell them I'm okay. I said, Yeah, I will. And so, uh, He ended up being a Springfield, when they had their police department. He ended up being a Springfield police officer, and he retired from that job. I think he passed away four or five years ago. But his brother sells cars for Sunshine Toyota. His name was Fred Gessner. I don't know what Fred passed away from, probably something from Agent Orange. And then, uh, I get up to Fubai, and I run into the guy that lived across the street from me. And I run into a guy, his grandmother lived behind my parents house. And I said, Boy, I'm seeing everybody over here. And then I, I was in Fubai one day, and I go to the PX, and I see another guy, and I This is Redhead. I'll never forget him. I said, What are you doing, Mike? He says, Trying to get out of here. I says, Okay. I said, But what's your job? He says, I'm the chaplain's driver. I said, Well, that can't be too bad of a gig. He said, Oh, it's terrible. Because at that time we were opening up Kan San again. And he said, He said, It wouldn't be so bad, but the chaplain likes to drive out to Kan San every day. And he said, That's terrible. 30 miles. And I don't want to run into nothing. I'm getting too short. So I'm going to give this gig up. I said, okay. And then I ran into another guy when I was in the Nang, I was going over to the CIA restaurant to get a hamburger. And I see this guy that I've been in junior high. Well, he was a year behind me and we looked at each other. I said, Bill Baker. He says, yeah, Danny Moss. So we. Made small talk. I says, what are you doing down here, Bill? He said, well, we're we're here till they can fix the runway at Fubai. I says, okay. I

said, we're we're here until they fixed the runway at Fubai and then we're moving up there. So he and I hung out together probably for about four or five months up there after missions, we would, he would come over to my unit or I'd go Usually I would go to his unit. He, he flew a lot. He got to go to Thailand a lot. So, he'd go to Thailand and he'd come back and I says, what you got, Bill? He says, well, I got a little Thai stick and I got some Cambodian red here, put them coffee, milk, grind it up and we'd smoke it. That stuff was better than, uh, better than a sudden for, you know, your neck gets tight flying, you know, but, uh, I've never smoked. I smoked when I got back. But, if I was gonna have to fly the next day, I'd just suck it up. Cause I didn't want nothing to impair my job. But, if I had the day off the next day, I'd roll one with him. I still see him, I'll call him up sometimes, and we'll meet at uh, Coney Island for breakfast. Because Bill. When he got, God looked him up. He said, you'll never guess what I'm doing now. I said, what Bill? He said, I'm an assistant pastor. And I said, Vietnam was that bad? He said, It must have been. When I met Bill, he was an E5. And he said he got out as a PFC. He said, because he got back to Fort Huachuca, and, He was flying Mohawks, he said, flying around in the desert just, you know, taking pictures wasn't no fun, so. He might miss a flight and he'd be down in Juarez. And he'd come back and he'd get written up. Bill was something else.

Dean Wetzel: He is something else. Well, I know this one is probably one you were expecting me to ask, and I, Gotta ask it, did you experience racism or

hatred towards you, or from your soldiers, or from your leadership, and did this factor into your morale while being over there?

Danny Moss: Yeah, it was from, uh, the leadership, and, cause when I, I was in the aviation, and there was a rule that if you got to be the senior E 5, and you were the shortest one, And the company, you got to run the club so you schedule shows and stuff like that. So I was coming up on, uh, the 90 days and I was gonna be the senior in the senior E five, and I was the shortest one, so I should have got to run the club. So we had a E-seven that was in charge of the club. So I went to him and I said, Hey Sarge, you know I'm coming up on my 90 days. When do I train to run the club? He looked at me. He said, Moss, I'm not going to let you run the club. I said, What? This is bullshit. I said, I'm the shortest one. And I'm coming up on 90 days. And that's the way we've always done it. He said, But if you run the club, Moss, you'll get in trouble. I said, Get in trouble? I knew what he was talking about. He said, yeah, you'll get in trouble. I said, no I won't. He says, well, and at that time, just before that, the uh, sergeant major of the army, I forgot his name now, but he had gotten caught in a big scandal. He was taking kickbacks from Carling, and who makes Coke, who makes Fresca, Coca Cola?

Dean Wetzel: I think so, yeah.

Danny Moss: He was taking kickbacks through the PX system from them for ordering so much of their product. And he said, look at the Sergeant Major at

the Army, what kind of trouble he got into. I said, Sarge? I said, I graduated from Belle Creek Central. I said, uh, Sergeant Major only had an eighth grade education. I said, I said, I know I'm smarter than that. And he said, Moss, you're not running the club. And I don't want to hear no more. That was probably the extent of the over. There might have been some Culvert, but I didn't, it it run off your back like water off of duck's back.

[01:10:37] **Dean Wetzel:** There was more pressing issues than that. Yeah. At that time. Right. All right. Um, yep. Well, a little, little bit more of a lighter subject. What was your funniest moment looking back at all of your time in Vietnam? And I know you have some dark humor so you can let it fly here. What was the one that sticks out as you look at it? Just like, I just, I just can't.

Danny Moss: Well, I think probably the funnest one, and I might have said it, was when I, uh, the night I'd come back from the club, a little over served and hadn't had a shower in six weeks. So I go in the shower and I come back to the hooch and tell the guys there's hot water. So they jump up and they said the water was ice cold. So the next night I go to the club. Probably get over served again. And I come back, and my footlocker was there by my bunk. So I take my lock off, and I hear hee hee hee. And so I run my hand around the top of my footlocker, and somebody found carpenter tacks. Now my footlocker's shut and painted him a camo stick. And I say, don't sleep guys. I'm going to get whoever did this. Yeah, that, that was probably the funniest.

Dean Wetzel: Um, well, another one here, uh, when you got back from Vietnam, obviously we've all heard the stories of how GIs in general weren't treated exactly well. What was your experience when you returned? Did you ever feel welcome back, and did you feel that the America you left to fight for was the same one that you were returning home to?

Danny Moss: Well, uh, let's see.

Dean Wetzel: I know that's a lot.

[01:12:45] **Danny Moss:** When I got back, and I flew into, flew into Detroit. I was, uh, at the airport at the bar. And this older gentleman came up to me and says and he looks. He said, you just getting back from Vietnam, huh? I said, yes sir. He said, can I buy you a drink? I said, yes sir. And he bought me a Chevy Trigo on the rocks. But then when I got up to KCC, you know, Oh, you guys shouldn't have been over there. You know, you're baby killers. I said, well, And I said, I didn't kill any babies that I knew of. I said, I wish you had have been there, and you might have been on the list with that attitude. But, you know, that's about it. Because I know some, some guys, it's talking about people spitting on them and stuff. I says, well, that had probably been World War II, all over. Or three. Cause somebody would have got, got waxed.

Dean Wetzel: Battle Creek, it's, it's very quiet here. It's not anything like a war zone at all. No. I'm sure that was night and day difference for you. How was transitioning to civilian life?

Danny Moss: Well, you know when, I don't know about when you guys came home, but when we came home, I was flying one day, and then when I hit my, uh, ten days left in country, I had a pretty good unit. I didn't have to fly anymore. I processed out of the company, then I went down and processed out of group. So, I had, you might say, about, uh, fifteen days to decompress. Whereas I talked to some infantry guys and they said they, you know, they get out of the field, process out of the company, and fly down to the replacement battalion, process out, and they were literally five days or less from walking out in the bush to getting out. But I, like I said, I had probably about 10 or 15 days to decompress. Use that to the best of my ability.

Dean Wetzel: And then just in the civilian life, did you have anything like PTSD, do you think?

Danny Moss: Yeah, I got PTSD. I got that now. And it mainly, it's mainly dealing with, I didn't tell the story one night, my barracks got hit with a rocket. I think I might have been smoking earlier in the night, but I was laying in the bed and something struck me and I said, Boy, I wonder what color death is. And I'm laying there and I see this orange street go by my window. Because we stayed in, we were in Da Nang and we had second floor Air Force barracks. They had

two story nice barracks. And I see this orange tail go by, and I hear BOOM! And then BOOM! I said, holy shit, that's death. So, I jump out, uh, fall out of the top rack, and the guy below me, he was a little slow cause I landed right in the middle of his back. And, uh, the guy on the other side of the wall from me, A piece of shrapnel had come across his head, it creased him, he got a good burn. But it made a hole about that big where my foot would have been, and I reacted so quickly. And, so then the next morning we got up and went and looked at the back, back of our barracks. Two rockets, one, one of the rockets had come practically in the back door. It had killed one of our civilian mechanics. We had civilian mechanics working on our aircraft. We were And they stayed on the first floor, the first half of the barracks. When that rocket come in, it exploded and killed one of the civilian mechanics. I think that, that, that was, well, that was pretty close. And then one morning I was in Chu Lai, I was going to wake the guys up. And that was, usually I didn't go wake the guys up. One of the, the teletype operator where we were at, he would go wake the guys up this was when I was briefing the general staff he would go wake the guys up so he was getting a message I says hey I'll go wake him up I walked out the door and I get halfway to the hooch and I hear a Hoom! It was close cause I could hear it come out of the tube and the next thing I knew not too far from me was a boom when I heard the hoof Cause a guy, some of the grunts have told me if you hear it come out the tube, better be flattening out. So I heard it come out the tube and I hit the ground and then it went, went off and I figure it was maybe a 60. It

wasn't a 80, 80 or 82. And I found a piece of shrapnel about the size of my thumb. The guy says, how you know it was a 60? He says. Because anything bigger, I'd have had some holes. You know, I said 60 is about like a hand grenade, I guess. I said, but that, you get hit by an 80 or 82. Or is it 81 or 82? We, let's see, we had

Dean Wetzel: We had 81s.

[01:18:53] **Danny Moss:** We had 81s. They had 82s. And, uh, I was told the reason they had 82s was because if they captured our 81s, they could use them in their tubes.

Dean Wetzel: Yeah, the 60s, uh, what we use, they have a hand launched, mortars are insane. Those guys, anybody that does mortars, I, I think they're just squirrely in the head. But the 60s have a, actually what they call a hand launched system. So they can actually hold the tube and shoot it like, almost like a, a bazooka type, essentially, in that.

Danny Moss: Like a, shoot it like a, uh, uh. Like a gun. Gun summoning. Yeah. Yeah. 16mm mortar.

Dean Wetzel: Yeah. Well, with that said, is there anything that, um, you'd like to add? You say or you do looking back that you can trace back to your service. For example, I do, I have a thing like where I'll respond to some people with

raw, which is the Marine thing that Marines do, or I'll say kill, which is another Marine response. Typically, I get some weird looks back because I usually say to a non Marine who's like, what are you saying there? But is there anything like that, that you have 50 years after your Not now.

Danny Moss: Not now. I've mellowed out in my old.

[01:20:10] **Dean Wetzel:** Maybe someday that I'll eventually mellow out. Yeah, mellow it out. Um, now after spending an incredible length of time in a war zone like that, Um, has your opinion of war changed? Or if not, has it reinforced anything in your mindset when it comes to war?

Danny Moss: Well, my opinion of it is You know, war, there's always been wars. And if you get into one, you want to get into it like desert storm to win it. Don't get into it like Vietnam where, you know, I'll kill 10 of you. You kill 10 of me, then I'll kill 30 of you. That's not the way to fight the war. You fight the war to win it. Not the way we fought Vietnam. We didn't fight Vietnam. We were trying to make a political statement on Vietnam. We didn't do that very well.

Dean Wetzel: For sure. Um, as this interview winds down, Danny, uh, I would like to ask, is there anything you would like to include in your oral history that we haven't talked about? Looking back at your service, anything that stands out that you want to add to it?

Danny Moss: No, not that I can think of. Well, I know, uh, back in November 2023, I got the American Legion Veteran of the Year, not American Legion, but the NAACP Veteran of the Year award for Battle Creek. And I think it has something to do with my service and my, liking to try to help people. Because I know one time there was a lady at our church, she, she had come home, and I don't know what, She was in the Army, but I don't know what she did. She had been overseas, and her and her husband were both in the service, and they had gotten into it. And so, she was staying with the aunt and the uncle, and her uncle had come in. He said, see if you can help her, because she's driving us nuts. I said, okay. So I went out to the VA, and I went to the, I forget the lady's name, but At one time it was in the basement of 39, but 39 is, they're doing repairs there now, so I don't know where the unit is moved to. But I told the lady the situation, that this lady needed help getting housing, and she gave me her card, and I gave it to the lady's uncle, and so it was a happy, happy home after that, I guess. I guess he got her housing. Help to get housing.

Dean Wetzel: That's good. Thank you for that. You know, it's what we as veterans have to do. We have to stand up for each other. We have to help each other when we can.

Danny Moss: Cause I know when I was working, I had a guy, he was, he was a helicopter mechanic. He had been at East. He got out as an E-7, but he had been a warrant officer, he had been a pilot. And one night, we were just sitting around

shooting the FAT, and I said, Doug, how'd you get to be an E-7? He says, it's a long story. So, he said that he had been a, he was a helicopter pilot, and his unit was on maneuvers up at Camp Grayling. And He said one evening, the uh, commander's staff piled in his helicopter and they went to the strip club up there somewhere near Grayley. So he didn't think nothing of it, set the helicopter down in the parking lot, go in, they have a jolly old time and so they, they're going out, somebody says this is a waste of government money or something, so. I guess that caused the little difference in opinion. He said, when they got back, he said, all hell broke loose. He said he got busted on E-7. I said, that was only because I was as low as they could bust him. And I said, well, I guess you were with your officer. So he says. They said I should have used better judgment, and I said, okay.

[01:25:00] **Dean Wetzel:** Um, often history is written by the victor. And we've kind of already touched on this a little bit. In the case of Vietnam, the American government would directly say that it was a failed conflict, right? Like, they would say that they didn't win Vietnam. Um, I have a feeling a lot of veterans would not agree with this statement. Uh, in particular with you, Danny, would you agree? Vietnam was failed or do you feel that you were successful in your mission of going over there?

Danny Moss: I, I have a, I think, you know, I was, I'm torn. I was successful doing the part that I had to do, but I was unsuccessful in helping us achieve the

end goal of winning because I didn't have any control over the, uh, press. The press lost that war for us. That was the first television war. The Viet Cong knew it. The North Vietnamese knew it. And Jane finally knew it.

Dean Wetzel: Well, Danny, I would like to thank you for your time at the conclusion of this. It's been a pleasure doing this oral history with you. Yeah. Thank you.

Danny Moss: All right.