



Veteran of the Month September 2008

Congratulations to Darrell J. Christopherson!

In partnership with the Veterans Coordination Commission, we are pleased to present the September 2008 Veteran of the Month Recognition to Darrell J. Christopherson.

Darrell Christopherson graduated from Sioux Falls Washington High School in 1959 and enlisted in the United States Air Force in October of that year. He remained on active duty until he medically retired in 1979. His first duty assignment was in the RADAR scope operators' field at Keesler AFB, Missouri. During his career, Darrell was stationed at various Bases within the United States, Thailand and Vietnam. In 1964, Darrell retrained into the Air Traffic Controller field and returned to Keesler AFB in 1974 as an instructor teaching the Air Traffic Controller Course. In 1979, Darrell was medically discharged from the US Air Force as a Master Sergeant and returned to Sioux Falls until 1981. Returning to Keesler as a civilian instructor, Darrell again was an instructor in Air Traffic Control retiring in 1994 when he moved to Rapid City.

One of his career highlights was being instrumental in saving aircraft that declared flight emergencies from potential disasters on three different occasions. Darrell's awards and ribbons include: The Bronze Star, Air Force Commendation Medal, AF Outstanding Unit Award with "V" device plus two Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters, AF Good Conduct Medal w/Four Bronze OLC, Army good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, w/Three Bronze OLC, AF Longevity Service Award Ribbon w/Three Bronze OLC, NCO PME Graduate Ribbon, Small Arms Expert Marksmanship Ribbon, Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross w/Palm Unit Citation and Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal.

Darrell has completed two and a half years of college and remains active today in the local TREA Chapter even with physical adversity. He is a Life Member of TREA, and a Life Member of the DAV. He was instrumental in organizing and starting a new TREA Chapter in Mississippi and he served as President of both TREA Chapters.

In 1962, Darrell married Helen Zafft and they have two adult children, Todd and Tonya and four grandchildren. Darrell Christopherson is a true patriot dedicated to the ideals of the military retiree and is well informed of the affects of governmental decisions toward them. He is most proud of his military service record and the service to his country, state, city and family.