

Firefighter Name: Lee Cranney
Position: Pilot
Fire Department: Los Angeles County Air Ops
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- 1) What branch and unit were you in? *Army, two tours in Vietnam.*
- 2) What was your highest rank? *Captain.*
- 3) Are you still enlisted as a reservist or National Guard? *No.*
- 4) Why did you join the service? *Dad was a Navy test pilot who was concerned about what I was going to do with my life. His Army pilot friends mentioned the Army Warrant Officer Pilot Training program and I thought that sounded pretty good. I was told I'd have to go to Vietnam, but decided that I was probably going to get drafted anyway, so signed up to be a helicopter pilot. I figure by enlisting I probably beat them drafting me by a week.*
- 5) What did you like the most about being in? *Flying helicopters.*
- 6) What did you like the least? *Red tape, politics, lots of field-grade officers needed to punch a ticket to get promoted, so they served in an air unit for six months, then moved on, which really impacted unit cohesiveness.*
- 7) What moment most defined your military experience? *Vietnam was an all-consuming focus at that time.*
- 8) What made you choose firefighting as a career? *Got tired of starving to death.*
- 9) What do you like the most about firefighting? *Variety. I've been all over the planet working for oil companies, but this job is really a compilation of the best of all of them.*
- 10) What do you like least about firefighting? *Nothing. This is just one of the best helicopter jobs around.*