

Name: Mark Long
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- 1) What branch and unit were you in? *Air Force in 1975 57150 Fire Protection Specialist at Norton AFB*
- 2) What was your highest rank? *E4*
- 3) Are you still enlisted as a reservist or National Guard? *No.*
- 4) Why did you join the service? *Objective was to get in as a firefighter in California, better for getting a job in the civilian field after tour. Wanted to find out if firefighting was for me. Also, the Air Force had the most bases in California, had guaranteed firefighting program, and had a decent firefighter training program at Chanute AFB in Illinois.*
- 5) What did you like the most about being in? *Structure was important to me, you knew where you were headed and what was going on. Once I got through Basic, I'm a hands-on kind of guy and I got lots of that from working at an air base. I lived off base with my wife and was able to treat this like a regular firefighter's job, working 24-hour shifts, then going home and having the convenience of going to school off-base as well.*
- 6) What did you like the least? *Having to keep my hair so short.*
- 7) What moment most defined your military experience? *The crash of a Bonanza V-tail who couldn't get his nose gear down where we had to foam the runway prior to his attempt at landing the plane. Man did those guys bail out of the cockpit in a hurry once they were down!*
- 8) What made you choose firefighting as a career? *My Dad had a friend who was a firefighter who held that out as a career. I had just met my wife-to-be at 19 and was looking for stability and that offered a long-term career for when we got married. The fact that the fire department is considered a para-military organization, that didn't bother me at all.*
- 9) What do you like the most about firefighting? *We get paid to help people get out of a situation, not necessarily a life-threatening emergency, but even just things like someone's dog getting his head stuck in a block wall.*
- 10) What do you like least about firefighting? *Some of the trauma people suffer in accidents, it really reminds you of how fragile life really is.*