



PAST DEPARTMENT COMMANDERS

2005 JOHN J. MARTIN 2006



I was born at Coles Station, Illinois, on 9 Feb, 1937, and was named after one of my great grand-fathers. My mother and father were Katharine M. Cheever and John E. Martin (They are both now deceased). I was their second son but eventually became the second of five sons. In 1940 we moved to Chicago, where we lived till mid 1948, when we moved back to Coles Station. Coles was a pretty neat place to live because it was out in the country and we had a lot of friends up and down the road. We had a couple of fishing holes not far from the house, and within a 15-20 minute bike ride (Or maybe an hour, depending on how much we "messed around.") we had a big and deep swimming hole, which was right down the hill

from our favorite "cow pasture" ball field. In the fall we hunted squirrels in a big stand of timber a quarter mile behind the house and rabbits and quail in the fencerows around the neighboring fields. I still have my first firearm, which was my "squirrel gun." It is a bolt action, five shot clip Mossberg .22 with iron sights. It was a "nail driver" then and it is still a "nail driver" today. I think I paid \$15.00 for it in 1950.

I went to high school in Sullivan, Illinois, where I majored in baseball (four years varsity catcher), the very sweet Campbell twins, and not paying quite enough attention to my grades. I graduated in 1956; Shortly thereafter, while going to school in Crawfordsville, Indiana, I was drafted into the Army. I had joined the Illinois National Guard in 1954 (I think), but neglected to transfer to the Indiana Guard after moving there, so that is why I got drafted right after high school. The army made me into a medic and up until my discharge, April, 1959, I was stationed at Sandia Base, N.M., Camp Mercury, Nevada (A-bomb testing) and Viet Nam (yes, Viet Nam in the late 50s) with a MAAG unit.

After the Army I worked as a telegrapher for the Wabash Railroad in Chicago until 1964, when we moved to the Kansas City area so my wife could be near her parents. From this time up until mid 1968, I was a deputy sheriff in Johnson County, Kansas. In mid 1968 I decided to go into the Air Force; I had finished college, and the Tet Offensive was going on so I decided to apply for a commission and then apply for flight school. I went through all of the hoops and finished flight training in 1969 and then went on to be stationed in the U.S., Panama, Alaska, Japan, Philippines and Korea. I accumulated more than 9,000 hours flying time in an airlift capacity, mainly the C-130 aircraft. I retired in 1993.

Sandra and I have four kids. Leslie is a bank manager in Ohio; John is a stock broker in the Houston area; Michael is head of the audio/visual department at K.U. Med Center and also owns his own small specialty cookie company and Laurie is a nurse, also in the Houston area. We have eight grandkids, and a ninth on the way, and we recently became great grandparents (UGH).

Sandra still works full time as the school secretary at a local elementary school and I am a part time teacher at the same school.

I very much enjoy history, especially military history, but I also have an interest in anything that flies (kites, rockets, sail planes, birds and older prop aircraft). I also am engaged in long range shooting.

We build kites and rockets, and one of these days I have it in mind to build a trebuchet (the current record for "chunking a punkin" stands at 4438 feet, but it was done with an air cannon. When Sandra retires we plan on doing some traveling.

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