

Walter R. Rhodes



The Korean War is known as one of the bloodiest wars in American history. Starting his tour in the Korean War, Lieutenant Walter R. Rhodes was sent to Korea at the age of twenty-one in 1950. Two days before landing, Lt. Rhodes was promoted to Corporal. Rhodes' 1st Sergeant asked him if he would be his Jeep driver and Rhodes accepted. This was when the danger really began for him. "During my time as the Captain's driver, God was surely watching over me," said Rhodes. On November 29, 1950 he faced the battle of KUNU-RI where the division he was in was virtually destroyed. On December 14, 1950 he was promoted to Sergeant as a gunner.

Walter R. Rhodes sacrificed more than just his own life serving his country. He only got sent home to see his wife to be, Sam, around three times before they got married. They were married in May 1952, and had their first child, Deb, in February 1953. Walter was shipped to Germany for about a year when Deb was only six months old. Walter and his wife then had a son named David who was born in December two years later. In July 1954, He went to work for ALCOA. He was employed there for 35 years, 5 months and 6 days. The last 26 years he worked there, he was a supervisor. In 1955, Walter began teaching the youth at his church and then years later he taught the adults. He was appointed a deacon, and later an elder at which he served until he was 71 years old. He also took his turn as one of the cooks at church camp until he was 81 years old.

Along his journey, Walter has been awarded the following metals: Distinguished Service Cross, Silver Star, Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Medal of Valor, WWII Occupation Medal (Germany), National Defense Service Medal, Korean Service Medal, Korean Presidential Unit Citation, United Nation Korean Service, 3 United States Presidential Unit Citation, and 6 Campaign Stars.

Walter states "God has looked after me a long time. First by choosing me a mate; one that helped me to become a child of His and helped me serve Him in whatever way I could. I would never have made it through the Korean War had He not been by my side. I believe He has a purpose for me, and I have tried to do the best I could. I thank God for all of his blessings, His love, and above all sending His Son to die for our sins."