

Living History: Feaster Williamson, Sr. recognized as February's Veteran of the Month

By Sherri Onorati

This month's Veteran of the Month honoree is Korean War veteran Feaster Williamson, Sr.

Williamson joined the United States Army in February 1951 where he served in the Infantry from February 1951 to 1952. He was stationed in Korea throughout his time in service and spent the harsh winter of 1951 in Korea until November 1952. After leaving the army, Williamson felt the desire to serve his country again and joined the Air Force Reserves, serving 35 years from 1955 until his retirement in 1990.

The Korean War, a war between North and South Korea, is often referred to as the forgotten war. Approximately 5.7 million U.S. veterans served in country and with UN backing led the fighting for the South, while China and the Soviet Union fought for the North. During the three-year battle, more than 37,000 American service members died. **Many** Korean War veterans went on to also serve in World War II and some even fought in Vietnam. Perhaps the most distinctive characteristic of the Korean War generation is their silence. Unlike veterans of other wars who wanted to talk about their service, Korean War veterans came home and tried to pick up their old lives and forget their wartime experiences.

And that's just what Feaster did. After his discharge from the Army, he came back to Tipton County and married his high school sweetheart and raised two children. He worked for Coca Cola for a bit and then went to work at the post office, as the postal carrier for the Raleigh Springs Mall, retiring from those duties in 1992. Williamson has been a member of Salem Baptist Church since the 1960s. A patriotic man, Williamson has been a member of the American Legion Post 237 for more than 30 years and has also served as a past Post Adjutant. He also served as a driver for Delta Human Resources for 10 years before his health forced him to retire.

Kathy Desjarlais, the 2015 Chairman of the Tipton County Veteran Council, nominated Williamson telling the crowd who had gathered in his honor, "Fester Williamson, Sr., is the light guided by the shining light of his strong and unwavering faith and he is one of the neatest people you'll ever meet... he's on the board of directors of the Tipton County Veterans Council longer than I have and I've been around 15 years!"

Williamson's son, Feaster Williamson, Jr. spoke of his father's dedication to his country, to his family and to his community.

"Dad is a good man and believed in hard work," he said. "He's honored to be with you all tonight and appreciates the recognition.

Williamson received a certificate of honor in recognition of his service and a Museum coffee mug.

The Veteran of the Month program is sponsored by the Tipton County Museum, Veteran Memorial and Nature Center and the Tipton County Veterans Council. Sponsors of the monthly event include Tipton County Veterans Council, Patriot Bank, The Bank of Tipton and Munford Funeral Home. Underwriters include the VFW Post 4840, the Disable American Veterans Auxiliary in Millington, Tim Sloan and the Rev. Norman Crittenden.