



**Tipton County Museum  
Veterans Memorial & Nature Center**

**Veteran of the Month  
September 2018**

**Douglas Perry Ward**

Born September 21, 1935 in Holcomb, Mississippi, Doug Ward enlisted in the United States Army a year after graduating from high school. After completion of Basic Training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, he trained to be a ranger, and he was sent to Korea where he served for 16 months with the 32<sup>nd</sup> Regiment, 7<sup>th</sup> Division. His unit served along with several other United Nations units including troops from Ethiopia, Italy, and Turkey. All the troops fought using machine guns; but the Ethiopians also carried spears, and the Turks carried Kilij's – their traditional curved swords. According to Doug, the Turkish troops were the toughest he had ever seen as going barefoot in the snow during the Korean winter did not seem to bother them. Once back in the U.S., he attended the NCO Academy. For the next three years he served with the Army Rangers in Georgia. Doug enjoyed his career in the military. In addition to being honored by being decorated by Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie, for his service to our country he was awarded the National Defense Service Medal and the Good Conduct Medal.

After an Honorable Discharge on April 12, 1957, he returned home to Memphis, Tennessee where he began a fruitful career as an insurance adjuster until his retirement at age 65. He married his sweetheart, Billie Sue Hannah, who sadly passed away at a young age. He met his current wife, the former Shirley Johnson, in 1965 when she worked a secretary for an insurance company he was required to visit once a week as an insurance adjuster. She had planned to meet several of her coworkers for dinner one evening, and Doug was going to join them. However, due to unfortunate circumstances, each of her coworkers had to back out at the last minute, leaving Shirley and Doug as the only two diners. Her coworkers had orchestrated the whole thing! It obviously worked, for they were married in January of 1966. Shirley was just 19 years old and said that Doug was, and is, the love of her life. They were blessed with two children, Jeff Ward and Lee Ann Jones, and two grandchildren. They are members of First Baptist Church of Covington where Doug has served as a Deacon. Doug was nominated for Veteran of the Month by his wife, Shirley.