

## **Korean War veteran honored as January Veteran**

*By Sherri Onorati, Special to The Leader*

Tipton County native Charles Chumley was recently honored as the January Veteran of the Month during a ceremony held at the Tipton County Museum, Veteran Memorial and Nature Center, a night which kicked off the second year of honoring Tipton County veterans and their service to the county and to the country.

Nominated by longtime friend and fellow veteran Vernon Parimore, there was standing room only as family, friends and guests came together to honor Chumley for his service to his country.

“We’ve been on the Veteran’s Council for several years and together on the museum board,” said Parimore. “I’m proud to be associated with Mr. Charles and honor to nominate him for the Veteran of the Month.”

Brother Jim Appleton from Garland United Methodist Church gave the invocation and the Pledge of Allegiance was recited to begin the ceremony. Kathy Desjarlais, president of the Tipton County Veterans Council read Chumley’s bio.

Chumley, born and raised in the Mt. Carmel community, graduated from Byars Hall High School in 1949 and married his high school sweetheart, Gail, in 1950. After graduation, Chumley found employment as a member of the Hatchie River survey crew for the Tennessee Department of Engineer before joining Bradley's Saw & Knife Shop in Memphis for two years. Already serving in the National Guard, he soon learned he would still be drafted into the Army. Wanting to make a choice for his service instead of being drafted, he joined the United States Air Force on Nov. 19, 1951, attending boot camp at Lackland AFB in San Antonio, Texas.

During Chumley’s enlistment during the Korean War timeframe, he served as a finance worker at McChord AFB in Washington and Tachikawa Airfield, Japan. After he was honorably discharged as a sergeant in 1955, Chumley and his family returned to Memphis where he was employed with Tooley Myron Studios as a portrait photographer and studio manager. The Chumley family grew during this period with the addition of a son, Charles Kevin and a daughter, Lee Ann. After working for Tooley for eight years, Chumley went to work for the City of Memphis, where he served as Division Superintendent, Superintendent of Sanitation, Assistant Manager to the Mid-South Coliseum, Inspection Bureau Manager, General Service Director, and Public Service Director. Chumley retired from Memphis city government service in 1983, but soon found went back to work for another 12 years at Guardsmark Security Services.

After retiring for the second time, Chumley and his wife moved back to Tipton County but not to relax. Both are active in the community, serving on various boards and attending Garland United Methodist Church, where Chumley is the chairman of the finance committee and the church council. He is a past board member of the Tipton County Commission on Aging and a founding member and Vice Chairman for the Tipton County Museum

Desjarlais, concluded the ceremony by reading Chumley’s certificate of honor, “It is with heart felt appreciation for your tireless efforts in support of our United States military, the Tipton County Museum, Veteran Memorial and Nature Center in partnership with the Tipton County Veterans Council gratefully acknowledge the selfless service of our veteran of the month for January 2016, Charles Chumley. Your dedication to our country is commendable and an honorable addition for the fight for freedom throughout the world.”

Visibly moved by the honor, Chumley was appreciative of the recognition.

“This means so much to me,” said Chumley. “I’ve always been a hard worker and I’ve worked hard at being a good member of the community and this means a lot to me. Especially, since I grew up here in Tipton County on the farm and my daddy was a sharecropper.”

In addition to the certificate of honor, Chumley was also presented with a voucher for a free canvas portrait, courtesy of Munford Funeral Home, a Veteran of the Month coffee mug and a year membership in the Tipton County Veteran’s Council.

When asked what lesson did he learn while serving in the military that has served him throughout life, Chumley’s response was one that can be used by all.

“Always be committed to do the best you can and to be the best person you want to be.”

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 premier sponsor Tipton County Veterans Council, Patriot Bank, The Bank of Tipton and Munford Funeral Home. Underwriters include the VFW Ray Pinner Post 4840 and the Disable American Veterans Auxiliary Unit 116 in Millington and Dunham Loge 50. The next honoree will be named on Tuesday, February 9 at 6:30 p.m. The public is invited to both make nominations and attend the ceremony.