

# Joe Dawidziak

1946-2025

“I have been involved in public service my entire life.”

## Service to the Country

Joe enlisted in the U.S. Marines. After being stationed in Washington, D.C., he transferred to serve a combat tour in Vietnam. After separating from active duty in 1968, he served with distinction for over three decades in the Marine Corps Reserve. He retired in 2003 with the rank of CW4. Chief Warrant Officer 4 is one of the highest ranked of all the enlisted personnel.

Joe served in Vietnam in multiple overseas tours in at least 5 of 7 continents. He also served in Kosovo working with NATO. A few highlights:

- He worked the Presidential detail and protected Lyndon B. Johnson
- He was a part of the Armed Forces Expeditionary Units, was a Parachutist, was a Rifleman, was a Radioman; all before being promoted to Chief Warrant Officer and finished his Military Career in Intelligence post 9/11.

Some highlights:

- Vietnam Campaign Medal
- National Defense Service Medalx4
- Vietnamese Service Medal
- Presidential Unit Citation
- Armed Forces Reserve Medal
- Kosovo Campaign Medal
- NATO Medalx2
- Armed Forces Expeditionary Medalx2
- Joint Service Commendation Medal
- Joint Service Achievement Medalx2
- Navy and Marine Corps Overseas Service Ribbon

Presidential Unit Medal: This is the equivalent of the Navy Cross and is only given when authorized by the President. The Presidential Unit Citation (PUC) for the US Marine Corps is one of the highest-level awards recognizing extraordinary heroism in action against an armed

enemy for displaying gallantry, determination, and esprit de corps that sets them apart from other units. It is one of the most prestigious medals outside of the Navy Cross and Medal of Honor and only issued by the US President. No one actually knew he got this until we found his records. He never spoke of it.

It is further worth noting, he was involved in an incident where his company reported that he personally went back into enemy fire to save the life of another Marine after being wounded.

## **Service to the Community**

While still in the Marine Corp Reserves, in 1974 Joe graduated from the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Academy and served the community as a Deputy Sheriff and was an investigator in the Los Angeles County Public Defender's office.

## **Service to Redondo Beach**

In 1993, Joe was elected as the District 1 Representative on the Redondo Beach City Council. Recently, he found himself in service again on the City's Charter Review Committee, which resulted in successful changes to our City's governing documents.

Some highlights during his time of service:

- Joe was a part of the revitalization of the Redondo Beach Pier area, he even was a part of trying to get an investment from Disneyland when he courted them to consider an investment. He was also actively involved in the "Rescue our Waterfront" effort.
- Joe lobbied for and sat on the Metro commission and sat on the board ensuring Redondo received adequate and lobbying for additional access to public transportation.
- Joe was very involved in supporting (of all things) Theatre, advocating and supporting the Redondo theatre.
- Joe served in the Southern California Association of Governments; he also worked to help get a strategy to introduce high speed internet into the area as part of the Telecommunications Deployment Strategy. His work helped move the internet forward in Redondo Beach.

## **A Family Affair...**

Claire and her husband have moved back to Redondo to live in the house Joe built with Joe's wife Ann. Claire played AYSO soccer in the local area, did Dance and Theatre in the same theatres, studied in the same libraries, and worked for Parks and Rec. There is nothing more meaningful and they return to the legacy that Joe built with the hope to contribute to the city in his memory.

"As we express our gratitude, we must never forget that the highest appreciation is not to utter words, but to live by them." John F. Kennedy -- there is no greater gift than a legacy that drives others to service. We hope this effort can share this message and drive others to serve their local area and Nation.