

# “Fortunate”

I was drafted into the Army in May 1968, right after I graduated from college. Because I had already been admitted to grad school my draft board informed me that I would be permitted to attend the Fall semester of GS, but I would be required to report for duty in January 1969!

While I was in graduate school, I reviewed my military options and joined the USAF in October 1968, with an enlistment date of January 1969.

I married in December 1968, and reported for duty at USAF's officer training school in January 1969, and graduated as a second lieutenant in May 1969. I was in a class of over 1,000 cadets. I was selected to service as a missile launch officer in the US's nuclear missile program.

My Vietnam experience was then to become a Vietnam Era veteran. I served, state side, as a missile launch officer until November 1974, when I left the service. While serving as a missile launch officer for the Strategic Air Command, I, obviously, did not experience the horror of personal battle, but I did experience the trauma, twice, of participating in situations where the launch of the nuclear missile was imminent, but the threat was downgraded before the situation got out of control. It was pretty frightening.

—Phillip, Loudonville