

# Frank Zaverul

## U.S. Navy



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Veteran Of The PTO

I was drafted at age 32 years old and weighed 132 pounds. I had a 2 year old daughter, Karen Ann, whom I adored. I was just trying to make a living working at the Packard Motor Car Company in Detroit. Entering the service in my situation was very upsetting and stressful for me. I also had a purebred English Setter dog that I'd hunted with for years and she had finally given me a litter of puppies.

Upon receiving my notice of induction, I went to the recruiting officer and discussed the situation. Under the circumstances, I asked for Army service because they would give you more time—two weeks. But, the Navy took me and gave me one week to take care of personal matters. Wow! I was not a happy camper. I had to place my dog and puppies with friends. I had to take my daughter to Illinois to reside with my Dad, knowing she'd be well taken care of. He was overjoyed to have her with him. Unfortunately, she was later taken away from my Dad and given to her grandparents in Detroit, Michigan. My Dad and I were heartbroken over the situation, but I've always kept in contact with my daughter through the years.

I left Detroit on December 8, 1943 and arrived at

Great Lakes, Illinois for 16 weeks of basic training. During my training, I had to help deliver milk, which came in 50 to 60 pound stainless steel containers. My helper was much shorter than me, making the job of carrying the containers uneven. So we had to walk slanted over to hold them up as walked. Eventually, my back hurt so bad that I reported it and hospitalized for 2 weeks.

Following hospitalization, we were sent by train to San Diego, California where we were stationed for approximately a month. During my time off, I got a job working at a canning factory putting grapes on a conveyor belt for 16 hours a shift. This was for extra spending money. We were then sent abroad on the USS Apollo arriving at Pearl Harbor where my duties were to unload bombs weighing about 100 pounds each. I had to arrange, life, and flip them sideways at the front to slide them on the barge where they were later transferred to trucks. Due to the weight of the bombs, I again hurt my back and was hospitalized for a week.

From Pearl Harbor, we shipped out to Guam. I was fortunate to finally have life a little easier here. I got to swim in the ocean and my duties consisted of driving the officers to various destinations, meetings, mess hall, entertainment centers and shopping. One day, while I was on duty, I was told that a friend of mine had come aboard to see me from his ship. It was Auburn, IL friend and neighbor Stanley Yasinski. It would have been a happy reunion, but unfortunately, I didn't get to see him.

Finally the war was over and we left Guam for the US. Homeward bound at last. We sailed through the Panama Canal to New York. While in New York waiting to be discharged, I again hurt my back from lifting the shells brought up by a conveyor. The shells were handed to each man from beginning to the end of the line. Next morning, I couldn't move so I was carried to sick bay where I stayed for a week. All my fellow Navy men had left the ship. The doctor had me doing exercises and told me I was discharged. He told me I could pack my bags and leave, but I couldn't lift my seabag. I had to have it sent to my Dad.

I left New York by train to visit my Dad in Auburn, Illinois and discuss my plans with him. I returned to Detroit and went to the Bumper Shop where I had previously worked for 15 years and was reinstated in my old job. I worked there 6 months and then took a leave of absence to move to Auburn and take care of my Dad as he was not well. I went to work in Springfield, Illinois at Trutter Plating Shop for several years and another shop for 25 years.

I met my wife Frances and we married in 1949. I am the father of 3 children—Karen Ann, Frank Jr. and Harry. I've been blessed with a loving and wonderful wife, children, family and friends. My back still gives me prob-

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lems at times, but I just have to do the best I can and enjoy each and every day. I have had many happy and priceless memories of our great life together, sharing our love, joy and being there for one another. That's what it's all about.

Frank Zaverul  
Auburn, Illinois