

## **DONALD N. BABB**

### **Biography**

**December, 2008**

Donald Neil Babb was born in Kansas City, Mo, to Carl H. and Ruth (Byrd) Babb. In 1958, Missouri Congressman George H. Christopher, 4th District, appointed him to West Point. Don graduated and was commissioned a 2nd Lt of Field Artillery in 1962. After graduation from field artillery officer basic at Ft Sill, OK, Don completed Airborne and Ranger training at Ft. Benning, GA and married Anne-Tove Marcussen in Dec 1962. He joined the 5th Bn, 4th Arty at Ft Carson, CO in April 1963 where he served as a forward observer, assistant battery executive officer and commanding officer, Battery C 5th Bn, 4th Arty, 5th Inf Div. A son, Scott, was born in April 1964. In August 1964, he was assigned to U.S. Military Command, Vietnam, where Don served as an Asst Arty Bn Advisor and Sector Arty Advisor. He returned to Ft Sill, OK, in 1965 to attend the Field Artillery Officer Career Course. Assigned to Sandia Base, NM, in 1966, Don served as Aide-de-Camp to the Commander, Joint Task Force Eight (JTF-8) and Test Command, DASA. A second son, Jon, was born in September 1966. Don returned to Vietnam in 1968 and served as Battery Commander, Battery A, 2nd Bn, 32nd Arty, 23rd Arty Group. On the night of September 17, 1968, he was seriously wounded when Fire Support Base St. Barbara, Tay Ninh Province, came under serious mortar attack. Medevaced to the 45th Surgical Hospital in Tay Ninh, Don was placed on the seriously ill list, condition guarded. His medical condition improved and he was transferred to the 12th Evac Hospital at Cu Chi; then to the 93rd Evac Hospital at Bien Hoa AFB for air transport to Japan and the 106th General Hospital; to Travis AFB, CA, and then to Fitzsimons General Hospital, Denver, CO. At Fitzsimons, Don completed physical recuperation and rehabilitation and was successfully fitted with prostheses for his bilateral leg amputations. In 1969, he was promoted to Major; applied to continue on active duty; received approval for continuation on active duty with assignment restrictions due to his physical profile; and assigned to the Field Artillery School, Office of the Director of Instruction until his permanent retirement for 100 percent disability on January 31, 1970. His military awards include the Silver Star, Bronze Star, Purple Heart, Air Medal, Ranger Tab and Parachutist Badge.

In May 1972, Don married Judith Clark. In 1974, he received an appointment in the U.S. Civil Service as a Prosthetic Representative Trainee, Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Service (PSAS), Veterans Administration Hospital Center (VAHC), West Los Angeles, CA. Promoted to Prosthetic Representative in 1975; he was appointed Acting Prosthetic Service Chief, serving until 1976 when a new service chief was assigned. In 1978, Don was appointed Supervisory Prosthetic Representative and served as Asst. Chief, Prosthetic Service, VAHC, West Los Angeles, CA. In 1981, he was promoted to the position of Chief, PSAS, and he served until January 1986, when he was promoted to the Veterans Administration Central Office (VACO), Washington, D.C. In VACO, he was

assigned to the position of Program Analyst in PSAS. Promoted to GS-14 in 1991 as a result of additional duties and responsibilities, he became the Prosthetic Regional Manager for the Western Region with oversight of the Prosthetic Program at 36 VA Medical Centers. Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Service in VA Central Office was staffed by ten individuals, including the Director, Deputy Director, four Regional Managers, and four support staff. The Director, Deputy, and three Regional Managers were fellow Vietnam War veterans, all disabled as the result of combat. Together they were highly visible reminders of veterans helping veterans. Don's final performance appraisal before his retirement in 1996 described him as "a decision maker, a dynamic team member and leader, totally trustworthy and reliable and can be counted on in any situation to do the right thing. He is a good man to have on your side". At his retirement, Don received the Department of Veterans Affairs prestigious "Honor Award" in recognition of his significant contributions and dedicated service to the VA Prosthetic and Sensory Aids Service. He provided competent leadership and strong commitment to headquarters and field prosthetic staff that clearly demonstrated unflinching support for the delivery of the highest quality prosthetic services for America's veterans.

Following Don's retirement, he and Judy moved to Nevada and settled in Garnerville, a small rural community south of Reno. Don participates in the activities of several veterans' service organizations, the Military Officers Association of America chapter, and the Nevada Federation of Chapters of NARFE (National Active and Retired Federal Employees Association). Don transferred his NARFE membership to the Min-Gard Chapter #2167 in 1997 and in 1998 served as Chapter Vice President; 1999 thru 2000 as Chapter President; 2000 thru 2002 as Federation Legislative Chair (National) and NARFE-PAC Chair; 2002 thru 2006 as Chapter Treasurer; 2007 thru 2008 as Chapter President; and 2004 thru 2008 as Federation Newsletter Editor.

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