

Campbell to Receive 30th Annual Palmer Veterans' Appreciation Award

By David Patton

Palmer Town Historian



James & Theresia Campbell

James E. Campbell, a U.S. Army veteran who served in West Germany during the Vietnam War, is the 2015 recipient of the 30th annual Palmer Veterans' Appreciation Award. Sponsored by Citizens Tri-County Bank, the award is presented each Veterans' Day by town historian David Patton.

Campbell took basic training at Fort Benning, Georgia, in early 1966, followed by AIT at Fort Sill, Oklahoma in self-propelled artillery. He was stationed in Germany with the 7th Army as a tank crew commander and had the honor of being on an Army rifle and pistol team of sharp shooters that competed against the German Army and civilian police units as well as the French Army.

On January 8, 1967, he met a German civilian, Theresia Klein, and they were married at a German courthouse on September 20, 1967. The Germans are a practical people and honeymoon, or no honeymoon, everyday life must go on.

During this special time they helped pick up potatoes on her father's farm. They came to the United States in 1968, and James received his Army discharge at Fort Dix, New Jersey, with the rank of corporal E-4.

Immigration, and especially illegal immigration, is a defining issue of our time. Almost a half-century after marrying an American, Mrs. Campbell is glad she came the right way. "Nobody gave me anything," she said. "I wanted to become a citizen and studied for it. You had to know all the officials from the mayor to the president and be able to write a sentence in English. If you want to be a citizen of this country, I think you should learn to speak English." She received her citizenship in 1973 at the Federal Building in Chattanooga. The Campbells are the parents of a son, Jimmy Campbell, and a daughter, Michelle Travis.

The first to receive this award was Malcolm P. Rankin, a highly decorated World War I soldier. He was followed, in order, by Obed Marion "Soap" MaNabb, Rufus Kilgore, Jr., Glenn A. Nunley, Robert W. Levan, William "Wet Duck" Dishroon, Alfred "Buddy" Nolan, Earl F. Creighton, Charles E. "Gene" Brooks, Bedford R. Glisson, Herschel L. Finch, Jr., James Lowrie "Jim" King, J.C. "Tom" Scissom, Carl E. Teeter" Morrison, John W. "Bill" Partin, Thomas M. Burnett, James Shrum, Jr., Billy Carl Guffey, William J. "Jack" Partin, Daniel "Dan" Coffelt, Larry G. Henry, Bobby Lynn Stinnett, Dennis A. Sweeton, Seann E. Lewis, Charles Edgar Sanders, Justin Smith, Steve A. Garner, Matthew Hampton, and Lecil Nolan.