

# Valor...from Page 1A



**The hardworking women of Quilts of Valor, who make the quilts and hold the ceremonies that honor veterans.**

Sue Young in the quarterly presentation ceremony.

The presentation of the quilts is always an emotional affair, as each veteran stands to be wrapped in their one-of-a-kind gift, which is always followed by the warm embrace of those who volunteer their time to craft the quilts.

Honored on Saturday were the following veterans, including eight who served in Vietnam, one in Korea and one in Iraq: Don Pruitt of Suches; David Walters of Hayesville, North Carolina; Jason Champlain of Blairsville; Lewis McCaffity of Blairsville; Tommy Jones of Blairsville; Terry Hardin of Hiwassee; Robert Earnshaw of Blairsville, near Young Harris; Thomas Mowell of Blairsville; Michael Roberts of Murphy, North Carolina; and Franklin McKinley Ensley Jr. of Young Harris.

James Guinn of Morganton couldn't make the presentation, and Ron Melillo of Blairsville received his quilt at home.

The following biographical information, compiled with the help of the veterans and their families, was made available during the quarterly meeting.

Terry Hardin went to boot camp in San Diego, California. After that, he went to submarine school in New London Naval Submarine Base



**Franklin McKinley Ensley Jr., U.S. Army, Vietnam, out of Young Harris. Brother of Sam Ensley.**



**Robert Earnshaw, U.S. Navy, Vietnam, of Blairsville (near Young Harris).**



**Terry Hardin, U.S. Navy, Vietnam, of Hiwassee.**

in Groton, Connecticut. He qualified on submarines in November 1966.

Hardin served in the Navy from 1966 to 1970. He was stationed on the USS Tusk SS 426 for all of his four years. He received a Vietnam War Ribbon.

He has one son, one daughter and a wonderful 7-year-old grandson. Hardin has lived in Hiwassee for 14 years and has been married for 41 years.

Franklin Ensley entered the Army on Aug. 10, 1964, and took his basic training at Fort Gordon and Fort Leonard Wood. He then served in Stuttgart and Nuremburg, Germany, before serving in Vietnam in 1966 and 1967.

For his honorable service, Franklin has received the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, the Vietnam Campaign Medal, and the Army Commendation Medal.

Ensley now lives in Young Harris.

Robert Earnshaw joined the U.S. Navy in October 1966 after graduating from Southern Technical Institute in Marietta. He served in Vietnam from July 18, 1968, to May 14, 1970, completing two tours of service.

For his honorable service, Earnshaw was awarded the National Defense Ribbon, Vietnam Service Medal with Four Bronze Clusters, Vietnam Campaign Ribbon with Attachment, and Naval Meritorious Unit Citation.

Earnshaw was honorably discharged in 1973 and resides in the Young Harris, Blairsville area with his loving wife Teresa and 15-year-old granddaughter, Haylee.

Don Pruitt is a native of Suches. He served in the U.S. Marine Corps during the Vietnam Conflict, arriving in

Da Nang on Dec. 25, 1968, after volunteering for assignment to Vietnam as an Infantry Platoon Commander.

On Oct. 6, 1969, he was leading a reconnaissance patrol when he stepped on a booby trap which resulted in several wounds and led to his retirement as permanently disabled.

For his honorable service, Don received the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal with One Star, the Vietnam Campaign Medal with Device, the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm, a Good Conduct Medal, a Combat Action Ribbon, the Purple Heart Medal and a Bronze Star.

Pruitt served in the Suches Clinic for 21 years with his wife, Theresa, and he retired in February of 2016.

He has three children, one stepdaughter, nine grandchildren, and one great-granddaughter, deceased. Pruitt said he appreciates the love of his family and friends, and his relationship with God.

Jason Champlain joined the U.S. Army and went through basic training at Fort Knox, Kentucky. He then went through training in his MOS 63W at Aberdeen Proving Grounds, Maryland

Champlain was deployed to Iraq from Feb. 13, 2004, through Feb. 10, 2005.

For his honorable service, Jason was awarded these medals and honors: Army Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Service Medal, the War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, the War on Terrorism Service Medal, the Armed Forces Reserve Medal, the Army Service Ribbon, an Army Lapel Button, and the Sharp Shooter Badge – Rifle.

Champlain and his wife Torrie have two children.

Lewis McCaffity joined

the Army on Feb. 1, 1969. He served in Vietnam from March 27, 1969, through March 26, 1970, with the 509th Radio Research Group. He was discharged from the Army on Nov. 12, 1971, as a sergeant, and then served in the National Guard.

For his honorable service, McCaffity has received the National Defense Service Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal with Two Stars, the Vietnam Campaign Medal with 60 Device, and the Army Commendation Medal.

Tommy Lee Jones went through basic training at Fort Hood, Texas, entering the Army on Sept. 28, 1966. He then attended Advanced Infantry Training, and was deployed to Vietnam from October 1967 to August 1968.

For his honorable service, Jones was awarded the Army Commendation Medallion for Meritorious Service in connection with military operations against hostile force. He also received the following medals: National Defense Service Medal, Good Conduct Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, and Expert Marksmanship for both the M-14 and M-16.

After returning home, Jones worked several jobs while being a husband and father. He served as Union County Fire and Rescue Chief for 13 years. Jones has pastored Fairview Baptist Church for 33 years.

Thomas Mowell joined the U.S. Air Force on Aug. 15, 1950, and served through Aug. 15, 1954. He took his Basic Training in Lackland AFB, Texas. He then attended Radio School in November 1950. Mowell served in Korea from June 1952 through June 1953.

For his honorable service, Thomas received the following medals: UN Service Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal, Korean Service Medal with Three Battle Stars, Korean War Service Medal awarded by the Korean Government on 50th Anniversary, National Defense Service Medal, Korean Presidential Unit Citation Fifth Communications Group; and badges for Sharp Shooter – carbine, and Marksman – .45 pistol and Garand rifle.

Mowell finished his tour in the Strategic Air Command from October 1953 to August 1954.

At the end of the presentation, Young and the rest of the Quilts of Valor volunteers wished the Vietnam Veterans in attendance a hearty "Welcome Home."