

Quilts...

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Boulware said that, as a Senior Enlisted Soldier, he took to heart the training of soldiers during a difficult time for the country, where most Reservists had no thought of going into a combat or hostile fire zone.

For his honorable service, 1SG Boulware was awarded the National Defense Service Medal and several other medals.

Boulware attended the ceremony with his wife Judy to witness his fellow Suches veterans receive quilts that day, and he was surprised to hear his name called out to claim a quilt of his own, as his family had kept the honor a secret.

"It's heartwarming to know that people cared enough to give me a quilt," said Boulware. "Veterans like myself really appreciate it, just for somebody saying thank you for what you did."

Roger Belanger, also of Suches, served in the U.S. Air Force from February 1953 to February 1961, during the Korean War and the Cold War.

Belanger attended Basic Training at Simpson AFB in New York, and service school at Lowry AFB in Colorado.

He served during the Korean War in Occupied Germany, and his permanent assignment was in the 69th Pilotless Missile Squadron in Hehn, Germany, where his specialty was Nuclear Weapons Machinist.

For his honorable service, he was awarded the National Defense Service Medal, the Army of Occupation Medal (Germany), and the Good Conduct Medal.

After Staff Sgt. Belanger was honorably discharged, he attended Utah State University and Yale University, where he received graduate degrees in forestry.

His spent 25 years with the U.S. Forest Service doing cooperative research with universities, industries and state forestry organizations, and his focus was on the management of pine and hardwood forests in the Southern states.

Belanger has published nearly 100 scientific papers.

He and his wife, Betty, have been married for 51 years and have one daughter, Ann.

They have lived in Suches for 22 years, are active in their community, and enjoy gardening, reading, quilting and



Roger Belanger getting hugs from the Quilts of Valor volunteers with the Misty Mountain Quilters' Guild. Photo/Shawn Jarrard



Thomas Boulware after receiving his Quilt of Valor on Saturday, Jan. 27. Photo/Shawn Jarrard

walking in the woods.

Merlyn Hughes of Suches also received a quilt on Jan. 27, and he served in the Air Force from February 1958 through December 1961, during the Vietnam era.

Hughes attended schools in Texas, Illinois and Mississippi, and was stationed in Louisiana, England, France and Germany as a crypto operator.

For his honorable service, Hughes was awarded the Air Force Longevity Service Award and the Good Conduct Medal.

After completing his military service, Hughes worked in construction for over 50 years, and he has been married to his wife Helen for 55 years.

Don Tripp received a Quilt of Valor in recognition of his service in the U.S. Navy during Vietnam, from September 1965 to September 1969.

He is a second-generation Navy man, as his father served during World War II and was a Seabee in the Pacific Theater.

Tripp went to Boot Camp at the Great Lakes training facility, and afterward served

on the USS Wilkinson out of Newport, Rhode Island, from November 1965 to June 1966.

He attended Machinery Repairman "A" school in San Diego, California, beginning in June 1966, and from there he went to Sasebo, Japan, and served on the USS Ajax AR-6 from September 1966 to December 1967.

Tripp then transferred to the USS Tutuila ARG-4, a gun boat repair ship, in Vung Tau, Vietnam, where he served until December 1968.

Next, Tripp was transferred back to San Diego to serve out the remainder of his tour on the USS Prairie AD-15.

Tripp and his wife Harriet will have been married for 46 years in May. They have four grandchildren.

All four men honored with Quilts of Valor that Saturday afternoon were friends and neighbors in the Suches community.

For more information or to get involved with the Quilts of Valor, visit QOVF.org.