

Past VFW National Commander Goldsmith Dies at 64

'...until the ending of the world but we in it shall be remembered. We few, we happy few, we band of brothers, for he today who sheds his blood with me shall be my brother.'

Oct 07, 2009

KANSAS CITY, Mo. — Past VFW National Commander James N. Goldsmith passed away at a hospice care center on Saturday, October 3 2009. He was 64.

James N. Goldsmith was elected Commander-in-Chief of the Veterans of Foreign Wars in 2001.

A Vietnam veteran, he joined VFW Post 5666, Flushing, Michigan, in 1967. He was a life member of VFW Post 4139 in Lapeer, Michigan. He served as All-State Post Commander in 1974, and in 1977 he earned recognition as an All-State and All-American District Commander. In 1978, he was selected as Michigan's "Young Veteran of the Year," and in 1980 became the first Vietnam veteran to be elected Department Junior Vice Commander. He earned All-American status as a Department Commander in 1982-1983.

Deeply concerned for the welfare of our active duty and reserve military forces, Goldsmith traveled worldwide listening to the needs of U.S. service men and women.

Past National Commander Goldsmith was born on November 20, 1944, and retired from the AC Spark Plug Division of General Motors in 1997 after 35 years of service. While employed at General Motors, he was instrumental in establishing a veterans committee in UAW Local 651, and served as the committee chairman for 17 years. He served in the U.S. Army from November 1965 to August 1967, with duty in Vietnam as an engineer. He received a Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, National Defense Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal and a Rifle Sharpshooter Badge.

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He was a member of the American Legion, Moose Lodge, Lapeer Eagles and a life member of the Military Order of the Cooties. He has two sons and three grandchildren.

One of Jims' trademark phrases that perhaps best defined Jim's indomitable spirit and term as VFW Commander-in-Chief was, "It's the right thing to do."