

‘Love of Country and Family’

VFW Post honors one of its own

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On April 16, 2023, Post 10826 in Verona, Virginia, surprised Post Commander Eugene Chavis with a gathering to celebrate his many years of service to veterans. Chavis, a charter member of the Verona Post, has been part of the VFW for more than 30 years. Serving as Post Quartermaster for 21 years before taking the reins as Commander for the next 15 years.

Chavis worked tirelessly to make the Post successful, but his dedication to his fellow veterans is what made him a hero among his colleagues.

Born in Ahoskie, North Carolina, Chavis grew up working in the peanut and tobacco fields beside his mother. He attended Hertford County’s C.S. Brown, the first high school for African Americans in North Carolina, before enlisting in the Air Force following high school in 1956.

He spent time in France, England, and Germany, as well as several places in the U.S. Chavis served two tours in Vietnam at Tan Son Nhut Air Base – his first from 1966-1967 and his second in 1969.

Following his retirement from the Air Force in 1976, Chavis was busy working and raising a family. In 1989, he became a charter member of VFW Post 10826, where he has been a leader ever since.

“The most amazing thing is how many people he knows, how much he served, how much people like him and his constant unwavering want to serve the veteran,” said fellow VFW member Raymond Carrier. “It’s just amazing to me.”

Carrier said that Chavis never says “no” to anyone. He volunteers his time and his vehicle to make sure vets have what they need.

The celebration for Chavis had numerous VFW dignitaries included past Commander-in-Chief Hal Roesch II and current Department of Virginia Commander Geoff Lyster. National Council of Administration representative Ken Wiseman also attended the event.

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“Eugene helped me every year at Stewart Middle School when we did our Heroes Welcome,” said teacher Linda Petzke. “He would bring veterans, and my students would conduct oral histories. It was the best day of the year to see the respect the students demonstrated.”

The now-retired history teacher said Chavis dedicated his time to making sure all students had an understanding of what it means to serve their country.

“Every year we had essay winners and flags all because Eugene made it happen,” Petzke said. “With Eugene, it is simple – love of country and family and pride of both.”

This article was written for the June/July 2023 issue of VFW Checkpoint by Raymond Carrier, a member of VFW Post 10826.