

Taught

By: Annaka Zaiser

What do you think of when you hear the word contribution? Maybe you think of what the thesaurus says: addition, grant, donation, improvement, augmental, or maybe even beneficial. But have you ever thought of a use for the word? I found a good one, the contribution of our veterans to our country.

Recently, I had the pleasure of interviewing my grandfather who served in the Air Force for 21 years, Major Jon P. Sundstrom. He served as an Air Weapons Controller in the Vietnam War and flew with AWACs for 5 years. Throughout his career, he taught other inquiring minds about being Air Weapons Controllers. "Lion49", as he was coded, was with his squadron every step of the way. If they needed something, he was there to give them information and knowledge. During his last 5 years of service, he was transferred into a training squadron. At which time, he taught others how to be proficient MCCs (Mission Crew Commanders).

He thought his greatest contribution was helping others to learn what he knew. He loved teaching others. He told me, "The day you stop learning should be the day you die." To me, this means that he learned stuff everyday and so should you and I.