

## **Colonel Harlan A. Lawson (Class 10-69)**

Colonel Lawson is a native Missourian born in October, 1943. He attended Central Missouri State College where he graduated with a teaching degree in mathematics and physics receiving the Charno Award as the most outstanding male graduate.

He taught one year at a large city high school followed by a year in the Republic of the Philippines on a Rotary International fellowship where he completed a graduate mathematics course of study at the University of the Philippines and taught mathematics at Ateneo University and Maryknoll College. After traveling around the world, he returned home to teach advanced math in Missouri.

He entered active duty with the United States Army at the St. Louis Induction Center in June, 1968. He completed basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri, followed by advanced individual training in Field Artillery at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. After graduating from Field Artillery Officer Candidate School, he was commissioned a Second Lieutenant of Field Artillery.

Colonel Lawson served in various staff and command positions in the 8th Infantry Division (Airborne) in Germany; Strategic Technical Directorate Assistance Team 158 in Vietnam; XVIII Airborne Division (Air Assault) at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, Saudi Arabia, and Iraq; with his final seven year tour at Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, as Director of Tests for the Defense Nuclear Agency (DNA).

He graduated from the Naval War College in Rhode Island and the Army War College in Pennsylvania. The Army paid for two years of graduate study at the University of California-Davis where he earned a Master of Engineering-Applied Science (Nuclear Physics) degree.

He served two tours with the DNA. As a Captain, he managed the development of the first automated war simulation combining Army and Marine ground forces with Air Force, Navy, and Marine air support. When he returned to DNA in 1992, as a Colonel, he directed the last two underground nuclear tests conducted by the United States. Following the nuclear test moratorium by President Clinton, Harlan redirected the Test Directorate towards conventional attacks of various hard targets simulating chemical, biological and nuclear storage facilities around the world. Most of the weapons used in Afghanistan and Iraq were field tested on Test Directorate test beds at the Nevada Test Site or White Sands Missile Range under Harlan's watchful eye. Harlan retired from active duty at Fort Bliss, Texas in June, 1999, with the rank of Colonel.

Colonel Lawson was awarded the Bronze Star three times in combat. Other awards include the Legion of Merit, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal and the Joint Service Commendation Medal. He earned the Parachutist and Jumpmaster badges as well as the Air Assault and Pathfinder badges and was awarded the Air Ground Operations Specialist designation by the United States Air Force at Hurlburt Field, Florida.