

## Colonel Merle D. Starr (Class 4-51)

Colonel Starr was born on January 12, 1930. He enlisted in the Army on September 3, 1948 and was commissioned a Second Lieutenant upon graduation from the Artillery Officer Candidate School, Fort Sill, Oklahoma on October 23, 1951.

He served in the Korean War and in Vietnam. He commanded an Anti-Aircraft Artillery Battery in 1954, served as an Advisor in Vietnam in 1965 and in 1975 commanded a Basic Combat Training Battalion at Fort Bliss, Texas. He later served as Director of Personnel and Community Services and culminated his career as the Chief of Staff, U. S. Army Air Defense Center, Fort Bliss.

He was the National Armed Services YMCA Military Volunteer of the Year in 1979.

His awards and decorations include the Legion of Merit, The Bronze Star, the Air Medal, the Army Commendation Medal with three Oak Leaf Clusters and the Combat Infantryman Badge.

# Col. Merle D. Starr selected military volunteer of the year

Col. Merle D. Starr, Chief of Staff, U.S. Army Air Defense Center, Fort Bliss, has been selected by National Armed Services YMCA Committee to receive the Military Volunteer Leader of the Year Award.

Presentation will be made by Fred Carl, executive director, Armed Services Department, El Paso Armed Services YMCA Committee of Management, at noon Monday at 315 E. Franklin.

Dignitaries invited to attend include Gen. Omar N. Bradley, Maj. Gen. John J. Koehler Jr., retired Gen. Ernst E. Roberts and Chris P. Fox.

This award is presented annually to one military and one civilian volunteer for outstanding service among the 32 operating Armed Services YMCA branches worldwide. Col. Starr was nominated and endorsed for this award by the staff and members of the Committee of Management for outstanding and dedicated support of El Paso Armed Services YMCA endeavors, program chairman Ann Buddington says.

Col. Starr has been an active participant on El Paso Armed Services YMCA Committee of Management since 1975. As brigade com-

mander of the newly formed Basic Combat Training Brigade at Fort Bliss, Col. Starr recognized the need for basic trainees to have wholesome alternatives for leisure time, Mrs. Buddington adds.

He sought the assistance of and worked closely with Armed Services YMCA in fostering various YMCA activities, including, purchase of a bus to transport basic trainees, Y/Community orientations to acquaint new recruits with the Y and El Paso and weekend tours.

Col. Starr began his military career as a recruit at Logan Heights Basic Training at Fort Bliss in 1946. He became Chief of Staff in 1978.



COL. STARR