



## William F. (Bill) Coultrip, 76

**Somonauk**

**Farmer:** 50 years

**Branch of Military:** Air Force

**Rank:** Sgt. E-5 (Sergeant)

**War:** Vietnam, July 1964 – July 1968

**Location of Service:** Vietnam & stationed in Okinawa, Japan

***“Serving my country means freedom. We must not give up and continue to fight for it.”***

**Drafted/Enlisted:**  
Enlisted

**Military Experiences:**  
“I received Basic Training at Lackland Air Force Base in San Antonio,

Texas in July 1964. From September to December 1964 I went to school at the Lowery Air Force Base in Aurora, Colorado to learn munitions. As a munition specialist I would protect and handle non-nuclear munitions for flight lines to load on planes. I was sent to Okinawa, Japan to be stationed there from January 1965 to July 1966 and protect the base.

We were deployed to Vietnam and I spent two years there. In Vietnam we lived in wooden shacks with dirt floors. Rockets were fired regularly and we never knew where they were going to land. It was enlightening going to a foreign country to see how people lived in a war zone. The Vietnamese people that I knew were proud of what they had and were happy the Americans were there. My first year in Vietnam was alright but the second year was tough.

I was honorably discharged in July 1968. I would not trade those four years of my life for anything.”

**What Serving Your Country Means:** “I enlisted in the Air Force for the Vietnam War which wasn’t very well received. I’m proud to have served my country so we can proudly display the American flag, sing the National Anthem and worship at the church of one’s choice. Most important, serving my country means freedom. We must not give up and continue to fight for it.”

**Notables:** Expecting to be drafted into the Army, Bill made the decision to enlist in the Air Force and have some control over his path of active duty. He was a munitions specialist. ►

(Left) Air Force Sgt. Bill Coultrip served for two years in Vietnam as a munitions specialist. (Inset) Bill farms in rural Somonauk with his son and brother.