

Army specialist explains his motives

By Kacey Stout
Staff reporter

Peter Joseph Nolasco a veteran of the Korean War was drafted at the age of 19 on Aug. 26, 1954. Peter was born in Lasalle Peru, Ill. and went to Lasalle Peru-Oglesby Junior college after high school. Peter took his brother's draft spot because his brother Raymond, 21, was recently married and felt bad for him getting drafted so volunteered to take his spot. Nolasco left his mother Trina, grandmother, and brother, Raymond, Aug. 26 for boot camp in Albuquerque, N. M. in the U.S Army.

Nolasco served for the U.S. Army for two years, and then served three and a half years for the ROTC. He was ranked as a Specialist 5 and was responsible for deciphering messages at night. Peter deployed out to Kyoto, Japan and surrounding areas for 18 months. His fondest memory of service was winning

touch football against 16 other barracks at Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas. His barrack was all draftees, and it was a big upset to the other barracks.

After his honorable discharge in 1956, Nolasco was awarded for serving an honorable term for the U.S Army. After his discharge he attended the University of New Mexico, studying business and elementary education. He played four years for the New Mexico State University Lobos football team as a safety and punt returner. He did not graduate but went on to work for a few wealthy companies.

Married in 1956, Nolasco has three children: Michael, Stephanie, and Jennifer. In 1960, his first job after the service and college was as a debt collector for two years. He got a job offer for 3M Minnesota Mining and Manufacturing as operations manager in St. Paul. For 14 years Nolasco worked in Minn. until he was

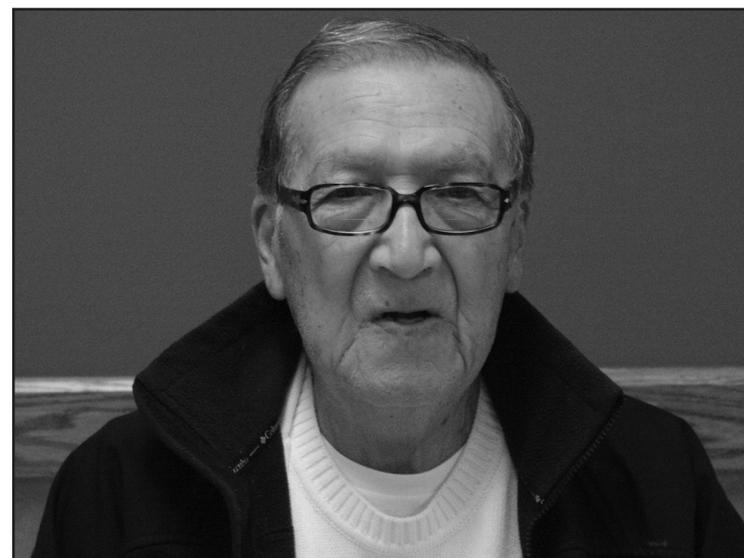
asked to move to Wichita. Peter worked for 3M until 1978. He was asked to move to Chicago, but his children did not want to go. He took a job for Otasco warehouse, where he stocked and unloaded trucks of various merchandise.

In 1984, he quit Otasco warehouse and was hired at the First National Bank as the credit card operations manager. He retired in the year of 1995 from the First National Bank.

After his retirement, he helped out his community in Wichita teaching kids arithmetic and English. Nolasco believes the best way for a veteran to celebrate Veterans Day is to give back to the community you live in.

To Nolasco Veterans Day would best be celebrated if everyone in the world had to serve one week in the military. "Just to see what our boys go through to defend our country."

At the age of 84, Nolasco lives at the Kansas Veterans Home



Peter Joseph Nolasco took his brother's draft spot because his brother was recently married and felt bad for him. (Kacey Stout/Collegian photographer)

moving in October of 2013. With a new replaced hip, Nolasco is enjoying breakfast in bed.

He hopes to help with the local Catholic Church to feed the unfortunate and teach the under privileged. Nolasco is glad

to have served his country and believes it formed the man he is today, impacting his life in a positive way.

Kacey Stout is a junior majoring in communication. You may email him at kacey.stout@sckans.edu

Korean War veteran confesses life-long advice

By Kylie Stamper
Staff reporter

"I am a beautiful son of a gun," said William "Bill" Edward Johnson. Johnson enlisted in the Marines in 1951 and served at the Alameda Naval Air Station in Calif. before serving in the Korean War for three years.

Johnson enlisted in the midst of his college career. He says, "I was in college going on a football scholarship and it was going fine, but then my buddies were getting killed in Korea and I felt like I needed to help. That's when I enlisted in the Marine Corps. We made a lot of sacrifices, but I got a lot of nice things back again."

Like many other young men, in his off time, he liked to chase girls. "That's all I did. That was sure a full-time job," said Johnson. "I had lots of close girlfriends and lots of unique buddy friends."

As nurses walked in and out of his room making sure everything was running smoothly, he threw out ornery conversations and jokes. He said, "I'm not ornery at

all, just plain mean. I have to be mean, a fighting machine."

To some of the nurses, he is known as a cowboy. "I ride anything with fur on it, and that's embarrassing to some people. I enjoy every minute of it," Johnson said.

His treasured keepsake isn't a letter from home or even a medal. His is different. He said, "I have some of the shrapnel I took out of my flesh when I got wounded, and the second time I was wounded, they sent my folks a telegram saying that I've been killed in service."

Veterans Day to him means celebrating every soldier and every veteran alike. He said, "It means all the things a guy can do to fight for our freedom. That we enjoy it, and we take it for granted every day. It didn't come free. It was a long hard fight to be free."

And to be celebrated, he said, "a bonus. A separate award for time expended and dedication, too. All the people that didn't come back. A lot of them were blown up over the hills in little pieces."

Throughout his recollections,

emotions were brewing. His stories came and he reminisced. "I was over there and where the danger was, life could end at any time. For every one of us, that was on the front line. It took four or five more people behind the front lines at home to keep us going and equipped to fight a miserable war. I hope we never have to

do it anymore," he said.

"For God's sake, go to college and make the best of it. You're at the age now that everything is fine," Johnson said, "And you just have to work a little bit harder to make sure that you pass in time. Love costs very much."

"War is hell. It takes away your innocence and there's no way you

can get it back. It is bothering you all the time and you think you've killed your fellow man. And you feel like you've broke every one of the Ten Commandments, including murder," said Johnson.

Kylie Stamper is a freshman majoring in Communication. You may email her at kylie.stamper@sckans.edu



William "Bill" Edward Johnson remembers serving in the Korean War for three years. (Bailey VenJohn/Collegian photographer)