

I was raised by my grandparents who raised me after my parents divorced when I was still an infant. We lived on a farm in Central Missouri. My grandparents were my 'mom and dad' to me. My grandfather and I raised a large watermelon patch every year. We would sell our melons in town. It was one of the ways my grandparents made extra money to get by on. I was young and did most of the farm work, even after I married in 1967. When I was drafted in the fall of 1967, it was hard on them. They moved to town as Grandpa could not do the farming by himself. I was sent to Vietnam in early 1968. When I reach Seattle, WA on my way to Vietnam my grandfather died from a heart attack. I was told from worry about me. After I got to Vietnam, there was letters waiting for me from my wife and Grandma. In one of Grandma's letter was five Black Diamond watermelon seeds. It was the kind Grandpa and I planted every year. With tears in my eyes, I planted these seeds in memory of him. The weather in Vietnam was good for my seeds. In a few months I had nice large watermelons, that was shared with my fellow soldiers. The patch survived the motor rounds without any damage. I sure Grandpa would have been proud of them. My wife wonders if there are watermelon patches in Vietnam now, that come seeds from the ones I grew. This is only one of the 'good' story I really have while there.

CWD