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Veteran Scott Remembers Friend, Tours, Duty

By Rich Morallo
*Transit Operations
Community Relations*

(Nov. 10, 2009) John Scott's military career began in 1961 when, fresh out of high school, he enlisted in the United States Navy at the age of 19.

"I wanted to get away from the dairy farms of Imperial Valley," said Scott, Metro's Rail Fleet Service Warranty and Quality Assurance Manager.

Through his 30 years in the Navy, Scott earned a degree in mechanical engineering and worked his way up the ranks to Chief Warrant Officer 4.

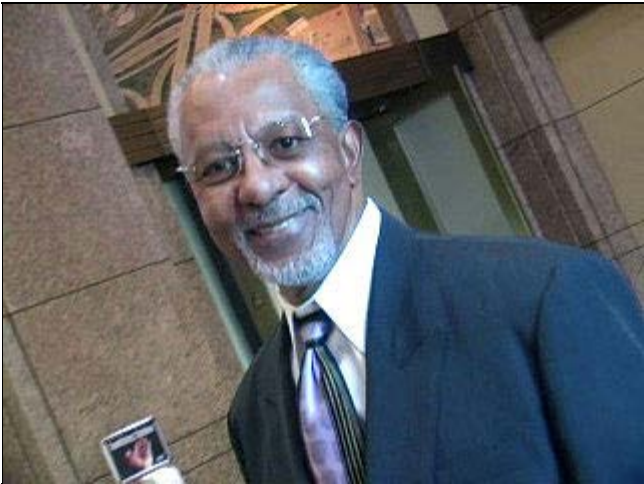
He sailed all over the world visiting Hawaii, China, Japan and Korea, while other tours of duty found him in San Diego, Philadelphia and Washington State working on the boilers, engines, generators and auxiliary diesel power and sea water distilling plants as the main propulsion officer aboard three different ships.

Before retiring in 1991, Scott served as the Quality Assurance Officer and head of the safety and facilities department at the Long Beach Naval Shipyard.

When Scott looks back on his naval service, the Metro manager mostly thinks about the seven tours he served in Vietnam.

"A tour for us lasted between six and nine months, so I spent about four years in Vietnam," explained Scott.

Scott recalls sitting on the fantail of his destroyer, watching as the ship discharged salvos of five-inch rounds into the shoreline three miles away. "The bombardment would last hours and sometimes days," Scott said.



John Scott, Rail Fleet Service Warranty and Quality Assurance Manager, enlisted in the U.S. Navy at age 19 in 1961 and retired in 1991 as the Quality Assurance Officer and head of the safety and facilities department at the Long Beach Naval Shipyard.

Scott also remembers his best friend in Vietnam, a gunboat "driver" named Oscar.

"He and I were very close. We always spent time together and went on liberty in Hong Kong and the Philippines," reminisced Scott.

Scott's friend - "a daredevil, not afraid of anything" - was killed by offshore fire while on a river patrol, said Scott quietly.

"My Veterans Day message to my brother and sister service members is to enjoy life, enjoy your families and support each other," he said.