



# Volunteer of the Month

## June 2017

*Jon Luker*



Jon Luker is the Buddy-to-Buddy June 2017 Volunteer of the Month! He has been making tremendous contributions to the program ever since he became a volunteer in July 2012. Jon has always shown the utmost dedication to helping fellow veterans, often going out of his way to meet in person with individuals he's assisting. Not only is he an excellent volunteer who consistently logs his interactions, he's helped recruit many other volunteers into the program. He currently serves as an at-large volunteer, but he was previously assigned to the Detroit Light Guard Armory and then at Selfridge Air National Guard Base, which he was instrumental in getting Buddy-to-Buddy into.

Jon served in the Army from 1967-71 and was stationed in Panama during that time. He trained as a mechanic and also repaired small arms. After he separated from the Army, Jon attended Eastern Michigan University, earning a Bachelor's in social sciences and business. He then went on to earn a law degree from the Michigan State University College of Law. Jon worked in land surveying and practiced primarily civil rights law. He worked as Concordia University's attorney before overseeing the university's veteran development program.

At a time when Jon went through a rough patch and found himself homeless, he came to learn about Buddy-to-Buddy after he was referred to Don Behm, one of the founding volunteers of the program. Don helped Jon get back on his feet, demonstrating the power of veterans helping other veterans. Jon was impressed by this and decided to become a Buddy-to-Buddy Volunteer Veteran himself. Although Jon has assisted countless individuals in the armories he was assigned to and in the community, there are a couple of people he's helped that have been particularly memorable for him. One such instance was when he worked with Don Behm and his daughter Erika to help save someone's life.

Jon says that as a volunteer with the program, he's most enjoyed "the fact that there's no doubt you're actually helping someone, so you know you're not wasting your time." He says he also enjoys the teamwork aspect of it: "You're not out there by yourself—there are plenty of people who are willing to chip in ideas and help."

Jon is a true example of someone who has fully dedicated himself to helping other veterans. In addition to his work with Buddy-to-Buddy, he is also the web master for the Michigan Special Forces Association, volunteers in one of the American Legion's finance offices, serves as the secretary and editor for Vietnam Veterans of America Chapter 310, and is a legal adviser for a non-profit called Bridge. He is a member of the American Legion, Vietnam Veterans of America, Special Forces Association, Enlisted Association, IAVA, and Team RWB.

Jon has two children and six-grandchildren. He enjoys camping and riding his newly acquired motorcycle with other veterans.

**Thank you for your years of great work and dedication, Jon!**