



## **TEXAS GENERAL LAND OFFICE**

### **COMMISSIONER DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.**

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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **Commissioner Buckingham Continues Series on General Land Office's Voices of Veterans Oral History Program**

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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AUSTIN — Today, Texas Land Commissioner and Veterans Land Board (VLB) Chairwoman Dawn Buckingham, M.D. introduced the next series installment highlighting the VLB's Voices of Veterans oral history program. In this episode, we hear the story of U.S. Marine Corps Veteran Rick Hatch.

To listen to Mr. Hatch tell his story, visit [VoicesofVeterans.org](https://VoicesofVeterans.org).

Rick "Gunny" Hatch joined the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve in 1962, directly after graduating high school. Even though he had initially wanted to remain close to home with the reserve, he quickly discovered his love for the Marine Corps and went on active duty in 1963.

He served two tours in Vietnam and described his experiences as "humorous at times, but scary as hell." Over the 12 years of his service, Mr. Hatch earned the Silver Star, three Purple Hearts, and The Navy & Marine Corps Achievement Medal with a Combat "V" device for valor. When "Gunny" Hatch received the rank of Gunnery Sergeant (GySgt), he became the youngest Marine to achieve the rank of Gunnery Sergeant during the Vietnam War.

"Gunny" Hatch also spoke of his incredible experiences of skydiving across Southern California and sometimes with the group that would come to be known as the Navy SEALs. He also discussed the difficult times experienced by Vietnam Veterans after they returned home, as well as his experience with Post Traumatic Stress.

Over the years, "Gunny" Hatch has donated his time and funds to help his fellow Veterans and has generously helped support his local community. Additionally, he has served as the Leader of the Honor Guard at the Ussery-Roan Texas State Veterans Home in Amarillo, Texas. When asked what advice he would give future generations, "Gunny" Hatch replied, "Do the best that you can, whatever it is. Be the best that you can."



## VOICES OF VETERANS

name

**Rick "Gunny" Hatch**

military branch

**US Marine Corps**

rank

**GySgt**

conflict

**Vietnam**

date interviewed

**02/07/2022**



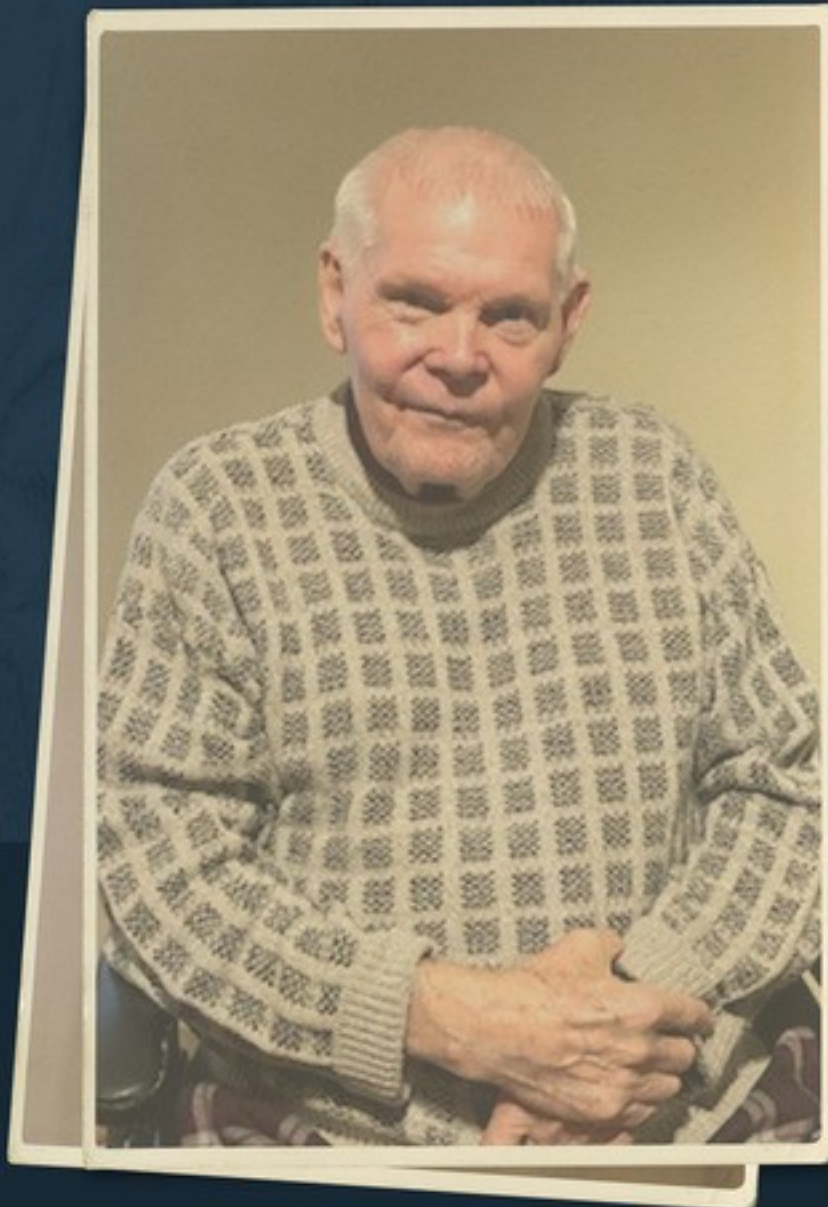
interview  
available on  
[voicesofveterans.org](http://voicesofveterans.org)

Rick "Gunny" Hatch joined the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve in 1962. He quickly realized he loved the Marine Corps and went on active duty in 1963. Gunny served two tours in Vietnam, earning him the Silver Star and three Purple Hearts. He retired from the Marine Corps in 1974 and now resides at the Ussery-Roan Texas State Veterans Home in Amarillo, Texas.



*U.S. Marine Corps Veteran Rick Hatch*

Voices of Veterans is the first Veteran oral history program undertaken by a state agency and records the stories of Texas Veterans through their time in service and after returning home from combat.



## VOICES OF VETERANS

VLB CHAIRWOMAN, DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.

*U.S. Marine Corps Veteran Rick Hatch*

Veterans interested in including their story in the Voices of Veterans oral history program can contact the VLB at 512-475-1248. Veterans can also fill out a contact form at [VoicesofVeterans.org](https://VoicesofVeterans.org). Please note that the Veteran must be a resident of Texas at time of their interview.





## VOICES OF VETERANS

VLB CHAIRWOMAN, DAWN BUCKINGHAM, M.D.

*U.S. Marine Corps Veteran Rick Hatch*

*The Voices of Veterans oral history program records the stories of Texas Veterans and archives their interviews in the Office of Veterans Records at the Texas General Land Office (GLO) for use by future researchers, historians, genealogists and the general public to inspire future generations and remind us of our Veterans' sacrifices.*