

Pool of Wisdom*

Lea Seago: An Accomplishment, Indeed

How a Late-Blooming Military Career Helped Her Contribute and Achieve a Lifelong Goal

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Anna Lea Seago, or “Lea” as she prefers to be called, was one of 20 out of a possible 600,000 veterans in Arizona who was recently inducted into the Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame (AVHOF). This year, there were 21 Medal of Honor recipients who were automatically inducted into AVHOF as well. On October 24 and 25 of 2013, there was a reception and awards luncheon held for the inductees at the El Zaribah Shrine Auditorium in Phoenix.

The Arizona Veterans Hall of Fame (AVHOF) recognizes Arizona veterans for significant post-military contributions on a local, state or national level. Inductees are veterans who have honorably served their country through military service and who continue to serve and inspire their fellow citizens with their deeds and accomplishments throughout their lifetime. The office of the Governor provides formal recognition of the AVHOF inductees.

“My father served in the Army early in the 1900’s and he had the fondest memories and the best stories of anyone. I preferred his accomplishments rather than luncheons, bridge, tennis and volleyball that were my mother’s legacy,” said Lea. “So my goal was to be ‘the best you can be’ in life when I joined the Army/Army Reserve.”



Lea retired as a Sergeant Major, US Army/Army Reserve. She didn’t join the Army right away however as she first had other “Chapters” in her life (as she calls them) that she completed before joining the military.

The First Chapters

Anna Lea Brixey was born on February 3, 1941 in Tulsa, OK, to William Herbert Brixey and Annie Sue Brixey. She had one younger brother, Herbert Clark Brixey.

As a child, she was interested in interior design, music, books, and art. She would regularly write letters to authors and congressmen—her favorite reply was from Pearl S. Buck, a bestselling and Nobel Prize-winning author.



She was an avid reader, working as a library volunteer at a young age. She is still a library volunteer.

Her parents instilled strong values and morals into their children, the most important of which, according to Lea, was to “keep your word.” “If you say you are going to do something, follow through – that’s what they taught me,” said Lea.

Lea attended Franklin Elementary School, Alexander Graham Bell Junior High, and Will Rogers High School—all in Tulsa. She was active in the Southern Baptist church, starting to play piano in the church at age seven. Lea studied music under Mrs. Emerson Bennett and at Tulsa University.

“When entering the first grade, my school records showed that I told the counselor I was going to be a career woman and live in Chicago, IL when I grew up,” said Lea.

Lea’s family discussed politics and world events at dinner every evening. According to Lea, her grandmother, Orrie Loveless, taught her “all the good things” she knew. But it was a relatively easy life, compared to today.

“We had to entertain ourselves as kids, so I climbed trees and played baseball. Today, its computers, cell phones, and texting,” said Lea.

Lea’s first job at the age of thirteen was to dust furniture in a large furniture/interior design store. After marriage, she taught piano lessons and was the organist for various funeral homes in the state of Kansas. She progressed to being the Women’s Editor of the *Peru Daily Tribune* in Peru, IN, followed by employment as the Assistant Director of Information for the Indiana State Chamber of Commerce in Indianapolis, IN.

“At that job, we published the Digest of Bills from the Indiana Legislature, and I was also one of the editors of the *Indiana Industrial Directory*,” said Lea.