

Lori Ann Turpin, Grand Marshall 4th of July Parade, July 4, 2019

Brownsburg Lions Club, Brownsburg, IN

By Ray Furner



Lori Ann Turpin was born on June 27 in Washington, DC to proud parents Loraine and Richard Turpin. She lived there until September 1951, when the Turpin family moved to Fayette IN to put down permanent roots. Richard's family was from that part of Boone County. In 1963, the Turpin's moved to Brownsburg to be close to the family owned business. Brownsburg was home to Loraine's parent's, and a good place for children to grow up.

Richard and Loraine, along with her brother Sam managed the family hardware store until 1992, when mega-stores started making the survival of family owned businesses very difficult. Lori was a normal teen-ager, graduating from Brownsburg High school in 1969. She played softball, participated in 4H, and studied French, a language that served her well in later years, as she traveled the in service to others.

In high school Lori had a drive that separated her from her peers. From her early teens she wanted to be a nurse to help others and to serve her country. After high school, the U.S. Navy offered a way to do both. She joined the Nurse Candidate Program at the University of Evansville with a full scholarship plus expenses from the Navy in 1971. Lori graduated with a BS in Nursing. She later extended her education with a Masters in Nursing from Indiana University focused on Childhood Developmental Disorders. As an overachiever, Lori felt

compelled to make straight A's. The hard work paid off. As a nursing student, she was invited to join Sigma Theta Tau, a Nursing Honor Society that recognizes high intellectual ability, leadership qualities and the potential for outstanding professional achievement

Following graduation Lori headed to Officer Indoctrination School in Newport, Rhode Island. There followed a flurry of duty stations from Corpus Christi, Texas to Sardinia to Pensacola, Florida. The whirlwind never seemed to stop. She was stationed in LaMaddalena, Italy, Okinawa Japan, and Sigonella Sicily with increasing opportunities and responsibilities at each stop. In Sicily she was Director of Nursing, and in Saudi Arabia during the first Gulf War, she was a charge nurse on an orthopedic ward and also prepared to take overflow patients from ICU. As though those duties were not enough, she also served an evening and weekend supervisor.

Upon returning from Saudi Arabia in 1991 she received a hero's welcome and her first ride in the Lions 4th of July Parade. Stateside duties involved three years as Inspector for the Navy Bureau of Medicine and General IG. And upon her return from Sicily, she served 15 months as a fellow in the office Senator Daniel Inouye from Hawaii. The last three years of service were with Tricare, a program designed to help active duty, dependents and retirees with access to health care, a massive undertaking that "could have been better organized".

Lori re-entered civilian life just a month after 9-11. Her parents were aging, and she found good use for her nursing skills in caring for them in Brownsburg. Richard passed away in 2006 and Loraine in 2012.

Since 2007 Lori has been the Hendricks County Service Officer, helping veterans navigate the system for things they need—and doing it more efficiently and effectively than was possible in Tricare. Her training as a nurse has again compelled her to help people who need it.

Currently, Lori is a member of American Legion, Post 331, VFW Post 6128, and 40 & 8 Voiture 1390, and Wa Pe Ke Way Chapter of the Daughters of the America Revolution. She has also been president of the Indiana Veterans Service Association and is currently treasurer. When I tracked her down for this interview, Lori was attending “summer camp” at Camp Atterbury.

In her spare time Lori enjoys gardening and cooking, and as a life-long learner, she earned an Associate’s degree in Culinary Arts from Ivy Tech. Perhaps her greatest passion is in spoiling her great nieces and nephew, Paige Waters, Chase Waters, Piper Syester, Payton Syester, Alexis Edwards and Brooke Edwards--making every effort to ensure that she remains their favorite aunt.

We are fortunate to have protectors and facilitators like Lori. The passion and professionalism she brings to any task are both welcome and much needed in today’s world. Brownsburg Lions are proud to have her as our Grand Marshall for the 2019 4th of July Parade. Thank you Lori and others like you for your service, and for making this celebration of freedom possible.