

**Colonel Danny Nelson, Grand Marshall, Brownsburg Lions Club Parade
Brownsburg, Indiana, July 3, 2021**



Danny always wanted to be a soldier, but first he had to learn how to milk cows and do other home chores common to central Indiana. Danny Nelson was born on October 5, 1946 in Greencastle, Indiana to Donald and Naoma Nelson, and until about 1951 farming was a way of life. Then, his family moved to Brownsburg. Fast forward to 1965, when he was drafted into the United States Army. He started moving up in the ranks right away.

Danny deployed to Viet Nam as a private first class, but quickly moved to the rank of staff sergeant. After a fire-fight in August 1968, that he received a field commission as a second lieutenant. He never looked back. Danny served 24 years on active duty in the Army, including thirteen months in Viet Nam, and thirty six years in the Indiana National Guard. He retired as a full Colonel.

During that time he met some of his heroes including General Omar Bradley. His experience in combat as both an enlisted man and an officer gave direction to his life, and perspective on what he should do next. It seems natural that he became a chaplain, someone who understands the intense highs and lows experienced by combat veterans.

Danny married Susan Dotlich on February 14, 1982, and they now have seven children, four boys and three girls, and 12 grandchildren. Two sons are in the Army, one owns his own company, and one is an artist. Their daughters include a nurse and two housewives. At one point Danny worked three different jobs, so his children could have a better life. He worked with Western Electric and Indiana Bell for 31 years.

Danny's favorite books are about military leadership, and his favorite characters are those who have actually "walked the walk" they describe. Omar Bradley, of course, who experienced a similar rise in rank, and Colin Powell, a decent human being, who understands the value of discipline, without being dogmatic.

He is currently Chaplain for the Brownsburg American Legion Post 331 and for Hendricks County VFW Post 6128 American legion and VFW. He provides a family tie for those who have none. Danny's wish for the world is for it to be a happier and safer place to live, not only for Americans, but for all mankind. He believes that can be achieved, if each person starts appreciating and respecting others.

As he ages, Danny continues to look for ways to give back to others. In his next position he will still be a Chaplain—a volunteer naturally. It is appropriate that Danny was first a farmer and then, a military man—just like Cincinnatus—and like Omar Bradley, he is a soldier's soldier. The world needs more men like Danny Nelson, and Brownsburg Lions are proud to have him as Grand Marshall for our Parade. Colonel Danny Nelson epitomizes our motto. WE SERVE!