By JAMIE PATTERSON
Managing Editor

Clyde Lear was only 19 years old when he found himself on a naval ship, heading to Vietnam. It was the first time he had ever left the country. Unsure of what to expect in foreign lands, the one thing he was sure of was that his country was at war.
He was headed right for it.
But along Lear's journey toward his generation's war, he saw remnants of past conflicts. He made stops in Hawaii, Japan and Korea.
"I saw the destruction left behind in Japan," he said. "I saw where Pearl Harbor was bombed. Those landmarks were still there. And now I was headed to Vietnam."
Lear, 64, was enlisted in the Navy when he was deployed to Vietnam. Serving as an aircraft mechanic, it was up to him to service and repair the planes that were heading into battle.
There was a lot of pressure on Lear and his fellow sailors as they watched the planes fly toward uncertainty. But it was what he had to do for his country.
"Even if you never enter a war zone, you are still a veteran because you don't know if you are going to come back home or if they are going to bring you home," he said. "We didn't know what was going to happen over there. We didn't know who we were fighting."
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