

Sgt. Audie Murphy Club member retired but active

By George Keck

I'm a proud member of the Sergeant Audie Murphy Club (SAMC). I was nominated, competed for, selected, and inducted in April 1994. I served on active duty from 1982 to 2003 and retired as a staff sergeant.

For those of you who don't know, the SAMC is considered an elite group of noncommissioned officers. Its nomination and selection process is open only for NCOs in the ranks of corporal through sergeant first class. The top 1 percent of the top 1 percent are usually the only ones considered for membership. Even fewer than that are selected for induction.

I've learned, over the years, that too many who earned SAMC membership around the Lawton Fort Sill area then retired, just quit. And by that, I mean they thought they no longer had anything to offer a young/new NCO.

In case all of you forgot, SAMC membership is for life, not just while you're on active duty. The neck ribbon and medallion are recognized by Army Regulation 670-1 as a permanent award. I just can't understand how a person who supposedly had the leadership characteristics of Audie Murphy could just quit. Audie never quit. He was an advocate for veterans long before the government recognized veterans' health concerns.

Since I retired, I've tried to attend as many SAMC meetings that I could. I seem to be the only retiree who still has an interest in the club. I just can't understand quitters. From 2003 to now, only me. Why? Where is everyone else?

I challenge all of you SAMC members to attend a monthly meeting. The next one is Oct. 6. I'll be there. I encourage you all to attend the next induction ceremony Oct. 15. I'll be there. Oh yeah, wear your medallion. *Editor's note: The Sergeant Audie Murphy Club induction ceremony will be Oct. 15, at 4 p.m., in Snow Hall's Kerwin Auditorium.*