

David Hemelright's Life Experiences Provide Useful Insight into His Work with the SSAB

Board member Dave Hemelright has had a varied and interesting career that has taken him from one side of the globe to the other and all over the United States.

Dave left his home in Carbondale, Pa., in 1966 and went to Pensacola, Fla., to become a Marine Corps combat helicopter pilot. He spent a little more than a year, from 1968 to 1969, in Vietnam. After his tour he returned to Pensacola to teach the piloting skills he honed in Southeast Asia.

He left the Marine Corps in 1970 and returned to Pennsylvania and served in the Pennsylvania Air National Guard. From there he went to the other side of world as part of Operation Peace Hawk building support facilities for the Royal Saudi airbases on the Arabian Peninsula. He also helped build weather stations in the Sahara Desert for the World Meteorological Organization of the United Nations.

Armed with considerable construction and logistics experience, Dave returned to the U.S. and became the first corporate maintenance manager for the new office supply chain Office Depot. "I started with them in 1988 when they had about a dozen stores. When I left years later they had more than 100 stores."

Dave took his experience from Office Depot in energy conservation and management and lighting technologies to the Broward County

School system in Florida where he was maintenance supervisor for more than 210 facilities—the largest school district in the country at the time.

Then Dave 'retired' for a time and drove trucks around the country and eventually settled in Lenoir City in Loudon County. But in 2003 he 'unretired' and became facility director for Loudon County Schools. With his work with the schools and as a member of the Loudon County Planning



Dave Hemelright and one of his restored vehicles at his home near Lenoir City.

Commission, he was able to implement energy conservation measures and energy efficient upgrades of about \$4.5 million that paid for themselves over the years.

In recent years Dave has worked as the marketing director for the Alliance Corp., of Glasgow, Ky., a K-12 public school construction manager and general contractor. Within the last few months he has assumed marketing duties with Kaatz, Binkley, Jones, and Morris Architects, which also specializes in K-12 schools.

Dave knew about ORSSAB through his acquaintance with former board member Sondra Sarten. "Her and her husband's company did some work for

me in Loudon County. I saw in the paper that she had left the board, so I made an application.

"Having been involved with environmental cleanup of schools and working with Energy Services Coalition, I thought I'd be a good fit for the board. I didn't realize my transportation background would be an asset in understanding how waste is transported," he said. "You just can't throw stuff on a truck and send it out west.

"I thought I might have a different perspective on things. I'm not a scientist or engineer or geologist, but I have an interest in those things, and I was eager to learn."

Even before he was officially appointed to the board in 2011 he attended several meetings "so there were no real surprises when I came on.

"I have been impressed with how the board members work together," he said. "We come from different backgrounds and locations, but we all work together for a common goal. I don't see the cliques and personal agendas that I've seen in other public bodies."

Dave is currently the vice chair of the board and is a member of the EM and Public Outreach committees. "I think I've been able to contribute to Public

Outreach by helping to get more exposure for the board in Loudon County," he said.

Besides his work with ORSSAB, Dave serves on the board of directors of the Tennessee School Plant Management Association and is a past president. He was named the Tennessee School Plant Manager of the Year in 2008. He has also been on the National School Plant Management Association board.

Dave's hobby of restoring old trucks has led him to involvement in the National Street Rod Association, and he is the Regional Vice President of the American Truck Historical Society. 🍃