

## **Highlighting Heroes: Bernard “Bernie” Bier**

### *Blue Ridge Active Living Center Volunteer Meals On Wheels Delivery Driver*

Bernard - or Bernie - grew up in Hoboken NJ, where he quit high school to join the workforce early. He was from a military family - Bernie's father, uncle and brother all served as well - so when he grew frustrated at the age of 17, Bernie decided to join the US Navy. During his initial boot camp training, he was “assigned” a buddy, who was from Philly. They remained friends throughout Bernie's four years in the Navy, even being stationed together.

During Bernie's time in service, he was aboard an ammunitions ship, charged with re-arming military vessels out at sea, including submarines, ships and aircrafts. Bernie described the precarious process which took place in the Mediterranean and Caribbean seas, during the Cuban Missile Crisis, for me, and it was nerve-wracking to hear. The most fun Bernie had while in the Navy was actually driving the ‘liberty boat,’ to ferry his crew back and forth to port during leave.

Bernie took his varied driving experience learned throughout his time in the service to join his father and older brother in the trucking business for a couple years, during which he and his wife Maureen traveled all over the U.S., before striking out to start their own business. They ran their trucking company for seven years before deciding to go back to Union driving. The switch from being a trucking business owner vs as a driver, Bernie feels really opens one's eyes to the considerations that must be done behind the scenes.

Bernie focused on his and his wife's family upon discharge and even more so after retirement from driving. Shortly after Maureen decided to seek part-time employment, Bernie heard of the need for volunteer Meals on Wheels drivers, and decided to step in to help the community they now call home, as well. Bernie feels there is much applicable experience to be gleaned from joining the military that can then be used in the general workforce, as well as in life in general.

***Thank you for your service and continued volunteerism, Bernie!***