

## JIM BEAVER: The Character You Know, The Name You Don't

BY MARC LEEPSON

If you were a fan of the epic 2004-06 HBO series *Deadwood*, there's little doubt that you will remember the character who went by the name of Ellsworth. That grizzled, grumpy prospector appeared in twenty-eight episodes and morphed from a sketchy coddler into one of the series' good guys. Jim Beaver, the actor who brilliantly played Ellsworth—whom he once described as “Gabby Hayes with Tourette’s Syndrome”—will receive VVA’s Excellence in the Arts Award at the Saturday night Awards Banquet at the 2019 National Convention in Spokane.

Beaver was born in Laramie, Wyoming, and grew up in Irving, Texas. He joined the U.S. Marine Corps two months after graduating from Fort Worth Christian Academy in 1968. He served with the 1st Marine Division in Vietnam in 1970-71, most of that time as a radio operator with the 1st Marine Regiment. After his honorable discharge, Beaver worked a series of jobs, graduated from the University of Central Oklahoma, and started appearing on stage first in Dallas and Louisville, and then in New York.

Beaver moved to Los Angeles in 1983 and since then has made more than 130 appearances in movies and TV shows. The films include

*Semi-Tough*, *Silkwood*, *Sister Act*, *Magnolia*, and *Adaptation*. He played the part of a Vietnam veteran in the great 1989 movie *In Country* opposite Bruce Willis. Beaver was the only Vietnam vet who acted in that movie, based on Bobbie Ann Mason’s novel, that explored the psychological legacy of the war among those who served—as well as a teen-aged girl whose father perished in the war.

In addition to *Deadwood*, Beaver has appeared in episodes of many other television shows, including *Matlock*, *Home Improvement*, *Third Rock from the Sun*, *Melrose Place*, *The X-Files*, *The West Wing*, and *That Seventies Show*, as well as a memorable turn as a gun dealer on two episodes of *Breaking Bad*.

Then there’s his long-running role as Bobby Singer on all fourteen seasons of *Supernatural*, the popular fantasy series on the CW Television Network about two ghost-busting brothers. Beaver first showed up at the end of the first season in 2005 and has remained part of the cast through the current 2018-19 season.

One critic likened Beaver’s Bobby Singer to Cooter, the good ole boy car mechanic on the TV show *Dukes of Hazard*.

Jim Beaver also has written a dozen works for the stage as well as three books, including his highly praised memoir, *Life’s That Way*. He told us he was “deeply honored to receive this award from Vietnam Veterans of America.”



## GENERAL WES CLARK: A Lifetime of Achievement

BY MARC LEEPSON

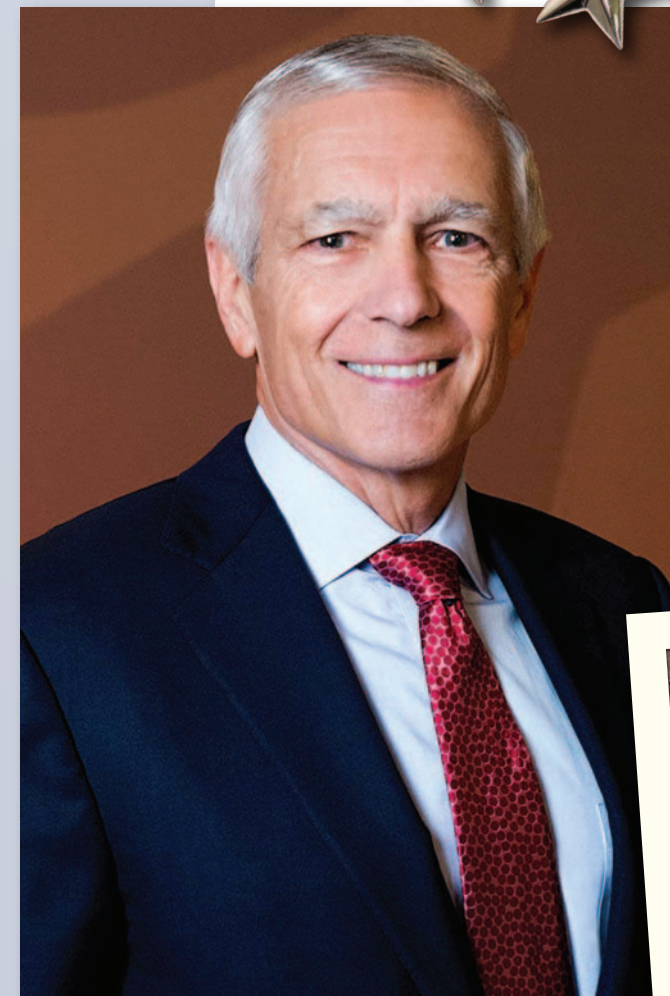
It’s difficult to envision a more accomplished resume than Retired U.S. Army Gen. Wesley Clark’s. For starters, he graduated with a National Merit Scholarship from Hall High School in Little Rock, Arkansas; graduated first in his class (of 1966) from West Point, and received a Rhodes Scholarship to Oxford University in the U.K., where he earned B.A. and M.A. degrees in philosophy, politics, and economics.

Gen. Clark—who will receive the VVA Lifetime Achievement Award during the General Session of the National Convention in Spokane—served in the Vietnam War from May 1969 to February 1970 as the commanding officer of a 1st Infantry Division mechanized infantry company. His tour ended after he was shot four times in a firefight, an engagement for which he received a Bronze Star and a Silver Star, as well as the Purple Heart. After the war, he served as a White House fellow in the Ford administration in 1975-76.

In the 1990s he commanded the First Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, served as the lead military negotiator for the Bosnian Peace Accords in 1995, then was Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Southern Command in Panama, and later of the U.S. European Command. His final military assignment was as NATO Supreme Allied Commander in Europe from 1997-2000. In that position he led NATO forces to victory in Operation Allied Force in Bosnia-Herzegovina.

After retiring from the Army as a four-star general in 2000, Gen. Clark has been an investment banker, businessman, TV commentator, teacher, and the author of four books. They include *Waging Modern War: Bosnia, Kosovo and A Time to Lead: For Duty, Honor, Country*.

Gen. Clark, who today runs his own strategic consulting firm, has received many awards—the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, honorary knighthoods from the U.K. and the Netherlands, and Commander of the Legion of Honor from France, among others. In July 2019 in Spokane he will be take home another important honor, this one from his fellow Vietnam War veterans.



VVA AWARDEES AT SPOKANE