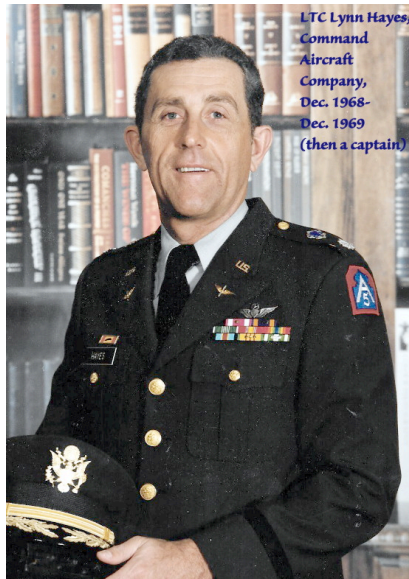


LYNN HARLAN HAYES, 78



LTC (R) Lynn H. Hayes slipped the surly bonds of earth on the morning of Wednesday, 2 January 2019, surrounded by his family and friends, after a brief illness. It was a take-off worthy of any proud aviator and one which left those of us behind with feelings of pride, peace, gratitude, and love.

Born on 11 November 1940 in Ryan, Oklahoma, to Willie Elmer Hayes and Elva Sue Coats, Lynn spent his growing-up years riding horses, helping with farm chores, and dreaming of someday piloting an airplane. This childhood reverie was tragically interrupted by two life-altering experiences that shaped Lynn into the true patriot, husband, father, and friend that he would become. The first was his traveling from Oklahoma, as a small boy, to Fort Sam Houston, Texas, to pick up his beloved Uncle Wallace who had returned from WW II duty in the Pacific, a victim of the Bataan Death March in the Philippines. The second was the day his father, whom he adored, was killed in an explosive traffic accident.

Upon a family relocation to Albuquerque, New Mexico, in 1958 he met his life-mate, Billie Ann Needham. They graduated from Highland High School in 1959 and were married after one year of college. Lynn continued his education at the University of New Mexico, earning his bachelor's degree, taught school for a brief period, and then joined the United States Army in 1966. After graduating Infantry Officer Candidate School at Fort Benning, Georgia in 1967 he achieved the first of his lifelong ambitions of flying airplanes by completing the Army's fixed-wing flight training program.

His combat service included aviation support in South Viet Nam (1968-69) and daily missions into Viet Nam, Laos, and Cambodia from 1972-1974 while his family was safe-havened in Bangkok, Thailand. Lynn transferred into the US Army Corps of Engineers in 1971 and was able to maintain a balance of aviation and engineering assignments throughout his 23-year career. From 1975 to 1978, Lynn was assigned to Fort Huachuca, first as a pilot and then as the Housing Officer. He returned to Fort Huachuca in 1988 as the Director of Engineering and Housing, subsequently finishing his career in 1990 as Commander of Libby Army Airfield.

It was during this final assignment that Lynn's unit was called upon to med-evac President Ronald Reagan who was thrown from a horse while vacationing with friends at a ranch near Cananea, Mexico. The episode began on July 4, 1989 and spanned a three-day period of repeated excursions across the international border, ferrying the former President and his wife Nancy to Raymond W. Bliss hospital, then to Tucson Medical Center, back to Mexico, doctor re-visits, etc., culminating in a personal invitation for Lynn and his crew to join the Reagans and Audrey Meadows for lunch at the ranch. Lynn considered this to be a highlight of his career and forever cherished the framed photo with Reagan, along with a letter of thanks from the Secret Service.

Other assignments included infantry duty with the First Division at Fort Riley, Kansas, combat heavy and topographic engineering duties in Hawaii, command of the Far East District Engineer's helicopter detachment in Seoul, South Korea, and Engineer Team Leader at the Fifth Army Readiness Group, Fort Sam Houston, Texas. His education was augmented by completion of the Engineer Advanced Course at Fort Belvoir, VA, the Army's Command and General Staff College Course, helicopter pilot training, instructor pilot training, and a master's degree from Central Michigan University.

Lynn realized the second of his life's ambitions when he and Billie owned and operated a home inspection and engineering service in Albuquerque, New Mexico, from 1994 to 2006. He brought to this business the same drive, enthusiasm and can-do spirit that he had maintained throughout his military career, citing and actually practicing his two oft-repeated maxims: "Lead, follow, or get out of the way" and "You either make things go good, or let them go bad."

After selling the business, Lynn and Billie returned to Sierra Vista for retirement, their third time to reside here. For enjoyment in his retirement years, Lynn loved playing tennis and organizing his tennis posses for the bi-weekly games. He also relished sharing his knowledge of structures and systems with friends and neighbors whenever they would encounter problems. They knew he was only a phone call away.

Lynn was preceded in death by his father, his mother, grandparents, numerous aunts, uncles, and cousins, and his sister-in-law Becky King who served as a constant reminder to him the significance of remaining positive and steadfast in the face of adversity. Surviving Lynn are his loving wife of many years, Billie, two sons, Barry Lynn and Bryan DeLaney, grandson Michael Lynn Hayes of Huntsville, Alabama, devoted nieces Kimberly DePiazza (Phillip) of Sierra Vista, Christy Lynn Spencer of Grand Prairie, Texas, Robin Ashmore of Greenville, Texas, and many extended family members.

The family wishes to express utmost appreciation to the staff of Casa de la Paz for their unending care and support not only for Lynn, but for family members, in this difficult time. We also wish to thank the many great friends who personally visited with Lynn during his final days---friends from the tennis community, our Mission Shadows neighbors, retired Army colleagues and others whose paths had intersected this special man. Memorials can be made to the Good Neighbor Alliance or the Salvation Army, favored by Lynn because of the immediate benefits available to the community.

A celebration of Lynn's life will be held at 10:30 a.m. on Tuesday, 8 January 2019, at Sierra Evangelical Lutheran Church, 101 N. Lenzner Avenue, Sierra Vista, followed by a Noon committal service at the Southern Arizona Veterans' Memorial Cemetery. Presiding over both services will be Pastor Mark Perry.