

COL (RET) DONALD EUGENE "GENE" WILSON

Gene was born May 27, 1934 to Lester "Buck" and Edna "Edd" Wilson in Shinnston, West Virginia. Eugene was the preferred name by his mother... hence, Gene. Gene was called away by his Maker on December 8, 2016 at the age of 82 after a valiant 7-year battle with Corticobasal Degeneration.

Gene went through school in Shinnston and completed 2 years of pre-engineering at Fairmont State College before receiving an appointment to the United States Military Academy. After graduating and being commissioned in Artillery June 1958, attending additional training programs and getting his wings as an Army Aviator, his first tour of duty was Bad Hersfeld, Germany with 3/14th Armored Cav Regiment Aviation Section as the East-West German Border pilot. It was here that Captain Gene Wilson met Ellie Gabler, a "school-marm" from California teaching 4th/5th grade on the Army Post. Their year-long courtship and marriage on January 12, 1963 led to 54 years of raising 3 children, 18 moves, many friends and new adventures.

Gene's military career of 30+ years provided us the opportunity to travel and explore. He was an avid reader of military history. Washington D.C. area was one of those places where history could be found around any corner. It was here that Gene was able to attend night school at American University and earn his Masters Degree. Gene found his assignments challenging and rewarding, especially if he could fulfill his passion of flying. The 220th Aviation Company was one of the highlights of his career. Gene took pride in knowing his troops, always looking out for their welfare. His assignments included -- two tours in Germany, two in Vietnam, one in Korea; stateside -- Fort Sill OK, Fort Bliss TX, Battle Creek MI, Fort Leavenworth KS, Washington D.C., Onalaska WI, Fort Lewis WA and Boise ID, Governor's Advisor to the National Guard. His military retirement in 1988 was followed by Manager of JAC-ACAP at Fort Lewis.

Gene was dedicated as much to his family as his military obligations. He also took pride in the accomplishments of his wife and three children and supported their activities even when he was away from home -- by phone or through letters and tape recordings. (No cell phones or face-time yet) Family activities included sports of all kinds, camping, hiking, biking, fishing, coaching, refereeing soccer, gardening, music and coin collecting. Gene was also actively engaged with several organizations -- Boy Scouts, the Oakbrook Swim and Tennis Club, Normanna Male Chorus of Tacoma, Fort Lewis Military Museum, MOWW, Lakewood Racquet & Sport Club, 220th Aviation Company Historian, the West Point Ski Club, the Puget Sound Miata Club and Treasurer of Stonebriar HOA 7-A. Gene, a loving and giving man, touched the lives of many people and will be missed.

Gene is survived by his wife, Ellie of Lakewood, daughter, Genevieve of Oakland CA, son, Doug, wife Suzy, granddaughters, Maddie and Emily of St. Charles MO, Son Chris, wife Teresa and grandson, Michael of Folsom CA, his brother Richard Wilson of Clarksburg WV, sister-in-law Joan Poimiroo and her family of El Dorado Hills CA, brother-in-law Walt Gabler and his family of Ukiah CA.

We also wish to thank Jodie, Bethany, Tammy and the staffs of Madigan Hospital, Toby Jones Care Center and Franciscan Hospice of University Place for their kindness and support during Gene's last journey with us. Rather than flowers please consider a gift to [Brain Support Network](#), PO Box 7264, Menlo Park, California 94026-7264 -- a 501©3 non-profit organization.