

John A. Smith



Lt. Colonel John A. Smith, U.S. Army (Retired) of Stillwater, Oklahoma, passed away peacefully at his home Tuesday, September 20, 2016, surrounded by his wife and family. He was 78 years old, born to Grover and Daisy Smith and raised on a family farm in Hannibal, Missouri.

John received a Bachelor's degree in Civil Engineering from University of Missouri and was commissioned as a 2nd Lieutenant in the U.S. Army in 1960. John served his country honorably for twenty three years. John was a Master Aviator with two tours in Vietnam as well as assignments in Germany and multiple locations in the

U.S. He attended the Army and General Staff College and while in the military, John received his MBA from Webster College.

Some of his noticeable firsts were: First co-op class between the University of Missouri and the Missouri Highway Department, Enrolled in first Army ROTC flight class at the University of Missouri, First to solo in Army flight school flight class (OFWAC 61-4) Deployed with the first fixed wing aviation company to Vietnam (18th Aviation Company) One of the first groups of aviators to receive orders to return to Vietnam for a second tour, Received his first Air Medal in the first Combat Decorations Ceremony at Fort Rucker, Alabama since WWII, Commander of the Biggs Field at Fort Bliss, TX, during the Space Shuttle Columbia's journey to the Kennedy Space Center for its first launch.

He was a highly decorated military soldier. He was the recipient of numerous medals, including the Bronze Star, the Meritorious Service Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Air Medal awarded 24 times, and the Bronze Schutzenshnr for marksmanship awarded by the German Army.

John's final duty assignment was as the Professor of Military Science at Oklahoma State University during 1979-83. After retiring from the Army in 1983, he was a Testing Specialist for the Oklahoma Department of Career and Technology Education and retired in 2000.

He was a 50-year member of the Order of the Masons, Herman Masonic Lodge in Quincy, Illinois. John loved to fly and continued to do so after his military service. John and his wife held season tickets and attended all Oklahoma State sporting events. He loved to fish, hunt and was an avid golfer. John and his wife cherished their koi water garden. He had a strong faith in God and was a member of the Highland Park United Methodist Church in Stillwater, Oklahoma.

He is survived by Sally, his loving wife of 56 years, their three sons and daughter-in-laws: Randall and Marcia, Daniel and Lisa, Scott and Christine, as well as five grandchildren: Tristan, Katherine, Natalie, Steven, and Hannah, and one great-grandson, Isaac. John is survived by his brother Jim who resides in Michigan. He was preceded in death by his parents Grover L. and Daisy Smith and his sister Judith Smith.

The family will receive friend son Monday, September 26, 2016 from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. at Strode Funeral Home, 610 Duncan St, Stillwater, Oklahoma. A memorial service will be held on Tuesday, September 27 at 10:00 a.m. at Highland Park United Methodist Church, 524 N. Stallard, Stillwater, Oklahoma. Following the service, John will be laid to rest at Fairlawn Cemetery, 1123 E. 6th St, Stillwater, Oklahoma with full military honors.