

Note:

All obituary submissions for Air Force retirees must be accompanied by the full name, correspondence address, and daytime telephone number of an information point of contact. Submissions will only be accepted by email. Please, no acronyms. Obituaries will remain posted until space limitations require removal.

August 2021

Retired **Senior Master Sgt. William Carl Blucker** passed away Aug. 21. He was born on March 28, 1933, in Ludington, Michigan, in his family home at 305 North Rath Avenue.

Blucker entered the Merchant Marines in 1950, sailing Lake Michigan on a railroad coal car ferry, the SS City of Milwaukee.

In 1953, Bill enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and spent over 27 years as an aircraft mechanic, earning many awards and medals. In 1954, Bill married the former Alice Eckstein from Honor Michigan. They were married 67 years until his passing.

Through numerous stateside and overseas assignments, he was most proud of his three tours in Vietnam.

After his military retirement in 1980, he also worked as a draftsman and car dealership customer service advocate until his final retirement.

Blucker was an avid hunter and fisherman. After retirement he volunteered his time as an ensign in the Crystal River Coast Guard Auxiliary, councilman for the City of Palm Shores, president of his Palm Shores home owner's association and volunteer with the County of Brevard Sheriff's Office.

He is survived by his wife, Alice, who resides in Melbourne Florida; son Rick and his wife, Mary, of Melbourne, Florida; son Mike and his wife, Lauri, of Huber Heights, Ohio; son Terry and his wife, Vikki, of Elizabeth City, North Carolina; and sisters Patsy Gulleff of Scottville, Michigan, and Janet Kella of Tucson, Arizona. Blucker is also survived by 8 grandchildren and 14 great grandchildren.

Visitation will be held Aug. 30 at the Beach Funeral Home at 1689 South Patrick Drive, Indian Harbour Beach, Florida, 32937, 3 to 6 p.m. Services and military honors will be held at the Cape Canaveral National Cemetery and will be scheduled at a later date. Those who like to make donations in Blucker's name can contribute online to St. Francis Reflections (Hospice) or the Space Coast Honor Flight (honoring veterans). (Courtesy of Beach Funeral Homes)

June 2020

Dorothy M. Robinson (née Schepens), 98, passed away peacefully June 24 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. The daughter of Belgian immigrants, she was born in 1921 in Evanston, Illinois.

She graduated with honors from Evanston High School and worked for the telephone company where she met her husband. Shortly after their marriage, he enlisted and trained as a pilot. He flew B-24s in the Europe (including the Ploesti raids) and was later recalled to serve in the Korean conflict where he was awarded a Bronze Star. He concluded his career as U.S. Air Attache to the Argentine air force. The couple settled in Albuquerque 45 years ago at the end of his military career.

Dorothy was intelligent and witty. She could “light up a room.” She loved animals and served as the unofficial Northeast Albuquerque “Humane Society,” finding and returning lost pets to their owners and adopting many strays. She was a talented musician, artist and writer, but chose to devote herself primarily to her family. She organized and managed over 12 moves during her 25 years as an Air Force wife, including posts in Newfoundland and Argentina where she became fluent in Spanish. As in so many military families, Dorothy was the glue that held her family together through thick and thin and, literally, from pillar to post. She will always have her family’s deepest love and gratitude.

She was preceded in death by her husband, retired Maj. Lorin E. Robinson. She is survived by sons Lorin Ralph, Kenyon Douglas and daughter Barrie Kay. In addition, she is survived by five grandchildren and eight great grandchildren.

Dorothy will be interred with her husband in the Santa Fe National Cemetery.

May 2020

Retired Senior Master Sgt. Harry Joseph Inman of Port Charlotte, Florida, died at home surrounded by family May 10, 2020.

Born Feb. 13, 1945 in Philadelphia to Francis and Mary Inman, Inman attended Cardinal Dougherty High School before enlisting in the U.S. Air Force in 1965. He married the love of his life, Carol Manning Turner, on Jan. 4, 1969. In 2019, they celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary with a cruise with family to Alaska.

Inman served with the Air Force in Vietnam and then spent 26 years working in various transportation squadrons while stationed at Torrejon Air Base, Spain; Fort Campbell, Kentucky; Taegu, South Korea; Beale AFB, California; Royal Air Force Bentwaters-Woodbridge, England; Randolph AFB, Texas; and Ramstein AB, Germany; before ending his USAF career at Homestead AFB, Florida.

Inman and his wife began their post-Air Force life by building a home in Port Charlotte where they have lived since 1993. He spent two years working in Saudi Arabia as a contractor; then working as a golf cart mechanic at the Venice Tree Farm in Venice, Florida; and for the last eight years for Home Depot.

He was known for his loyalty and dependability, and loved talking about fishing and the weather as well as spending time with his grandchildren. Inman is survived by his loving wife, Carol; children Timothy (daughter-in-law Misty and children Ryan and Shane), James (wife Heidi and children Jordan and Aidan), Denise (husband James Scott Williams) and Susan (wife Carrie Zanger). He is also survived by his siblings and their families: Mary Frances Fithian; Dora DiMartino; Walter Inman; Patricia Zitomer; Eugene Inman; his brother-in-law Mark Turner and wife Nancy Claridge Turner; and his brother-in-law Arthur Turner. Inman was preceded in death by his parents and siblings Henrietta Cathcart and Joseph Inman, and his mother-in-law Mary Jayne Turner Murray (nee Jeffres).

A funeral mass for Harry will take place at San Antonio Catholic Church on June 23, 2020, at 11 a.m. He will be interred in the Sarasota National Cemetery.

APRIL 2020

Retired Maj. (Dr.) Margaret M. Baker passed away at age 60 on April 24, 2020, in Port Angeles, Washington. She was born in Bloomington, Indiana, on April 24, 1960, to Barbara Baker and Dr. Robert H. Baker Jr.

The major was raised in Portage Michigan, and won an athletic softball scholarship to attend Pennsylvania State University in University Park, Pennsylvania. While at Penn State, she earned four varsity letters in softball from 1978-1982. At that time, Penn State was an independent, but later joined the proud heritage of the Big Ten Conference.

Baker was recruited by Pat McTarsney during the first year that athletic scholarships were offered for softball and was given three full-ride scholarships like all her teammates that year. Today, according to her family, sports scholarships for women seem commonplace, but in the late 1970s, when Title IX was just beginning to be instituted, few scholarships for women athletes were available. She reminisced once: "At ball practice my first day on campus as a freshman, I remember thinking, 'Wow, these gals are all incredible athletes. My high school team had won the Michigan 4-A State Championship and included many all-stars, but this was certainly playing at another level.'"

She went on to receive a Bachelor of Science degree in 1982. Majoring in pre-medicine, she graduated with honors and studied for her medical degree at Georgetown University School of Medicine where she graduated in 1986 before going on to an internship at Brown University. Her experience at Penn State piqued her interest in sports medicine, so her residency was in orthopedic surgery at University San Antonio

Uniformed Services Health Education Consortium. Baker went on to spend 13 years in the U.S. Air Force, where she had the opportunity to do everything from sports medicine to combat casualty care. Retiring in 1995 as a major, had also served in South Korea. She said "I will always cherish my memories of college and the friends I made there. More than championships and trophies, what has helped carry me through life and career are the principals of discipline, time management and balance." She completed a residency at Wilford Hall Medical Center specializing in sports medicine and trauma surgery.

Baker moved to Washington in the mid-90s, getting her medical license in that state in 1996, first working for Virginia Mason in Port Angeles, eventually opening her own clinic in 1999 called Center for Bone & Joint Surgery which was affiliated with Olympic Medical Center. About this time, she started drafting plans to build her beloved "farm" on Eden Valley Road just south of Port Angeles. She joined the Port Angeles Symphony Orchestra where she played principal French horn for 19 years. Baker continued to enjoy "farming", raising sheep and llamas, golfing and throwing big family dinners at Christmas, Thanksgiving and Easter. Margaret's mother and father retired from Kalamazoo and moved to Port Angeles to be near her. They always shared a love for golf, watching the Cubs and coming to her symphony performances. She traveled with her family in August 2017, as part of her parent's 60th wedding anniversary, to Salem, Oregon, to witness the spectacular total solar eclipse.

The major was loyal and fiercely loving; her hugs were magnanimous; she was quick to smile; and loved spending time with her family and friends. She had a talent for drawing and was a published author. She will forever be loved and missed by her extended family including her mother; brother, Robert III; sister, Elizabeth; brother-in-law, Patrick; nieces, Antonia and Sophia; uncles Peter and Michael; and estranged Wife, Ann. A memorial remembrance will be held July 24 at 4 p.m. on Zoom. Contact Elizabeth Stoyanovich at Stoyanovich_elizabet@smc.edu for more information. In lieu of flowers, the family asks to consider a donation to the Port Angeles Symphony Orchestra.

April 2019

Retired Chief Master Sgt. Kurt Ernst Modest, 89, of rural Tenstrike, Minnesota, died April 24, 2019 at the Sanford Bemidji Medical Center.

Modest was born May 17, 1929 in Gross Rudlauken, East Prussia, the son of Fritz and Anna (Gronau) Modest. He lost his father at age 2, and immigrated to Phoenix, Arizona in 1953, where he met and fell in love with Isabell Ott. They were united in marriage Aug. 5, 1953 in Phoenix. He then joined the US Air Force and retired 22 years later in March 1976.

Modest worked in ground radio communications while serving in Germany, Taiwan and the United States. After retiring, he worked building two homes while teaching

electronics for the University of Maryland to the U.S. military. They moved in 2016 to live near his daughter in Hagali Township, Minnesota. He enjoyed hunting, fishing and playing chess.

He is survived by his loving wife of 65 years, Isabell Modest of Tenstrike; son, Ron (Stepheni Reynolds) Modest of Myrtle Beach, South Carolina; daughter, Sue (Jerry) Young of Tenstrike. Modest is also survived by and four grandsons: Corey (Erin) Young of Austin, Texas; U.S. Army Sgt. Shawn Young; Aaron (Lee Ann Fraley) Young of St. Cloud, Minnesota; and Kaleb (Kelsey) Young of Tenstrike.

Military services and honors were held April 27 at the Cease Funeral Home in Blackduck, Minnesota. Military honors were provided by American Legion Post No. 372 of Blackduck. Condolences can be sent to www.ceasefuneralhome.com.

June 2018

Retired Chief Master Sergeant Norman Burgo, born May 2, 1934, passed away June 28, 2018. He is survived by his wife, Antoinette.

February 2018

Retired Chief Master Sgt. Blaine R. Means of Oak Island, North Carolina, passed away Feb. 3, 2017, after a seven-month battle with Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis.

Means was born in Los Angeles, California on Jan. 30, 1947, to the late Bevo L. Means and Betty (Detwiler) Means. He graduated from Simi Valley High School and immediately joined the Air Force to begin his 30-year career. The chief proudly served in Vietnam as an air transport specialist.

Upon his return to the United States he was stationed in Oklahoma and became a loadmaster. After a couple years, he returned to California and assumed duty at Travis Air Force base. He attended the NCO Academy and the SNCO Academy.

He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, Meritorious Service Medal with one device, Air Medal with two devices, Air Force Commendation Medal, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with one device, Air Force Organizational Excellence Award with one device, Air Force Good Conduct Medal with seven devices, National Defense Service Medal with one device, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal, Vietnam Service Medal with two devices, Air Force Longevity Service Ribbon with six devices, Air Force Overseas Short Tour Ribbon, NCO Professional Military Education Graduation Ribbon and Air Force Training Ribbon.

The chief is survived by his loving wife of 24 years, Donna Crawford Means; his devoted daughter, Amanda Means Castro; his special stepdaughters, Kristen Corley (Robby) of South Carolina, Robin Palumbo Thompsons (Tommy) and Angela Palumbo Hastings (Allen) of Delaware; and six granddaughters and three grandsons.

He will be interred in Arlington National Cemetery at a later date.

December 2017

Retired Senior Master Sgt. Arthur Fetskos passed away Dec. 13, 2016. He was the deputy director of Florida's Patrick Air Force Base Retiree Activities Office where he volunteered for more than 25 years.

Born in 1923 in Albany, New York, Fetskos joined the Army in 1942 after getting his mother's signature and permission to do so. His desire was to fly planes despite his mother's objections. He traveled to Fort Dix in New Jersey for initial processing and to await orders for the pre-flight pilot training program at Randolph Air Force Base in San Antonio, Texas.

Fetskos flew PT-13s then relocated to Waco, Texas, for basic bomber flying training on the AT-6. Unfortunately for Art, he washed out along with many others as the war was drawing down. He still wanted to fly, and was assigned as a gunner on the B-24 Liberator. In England, he was assigned to the 445th Bomb Group with B-24s at Upper Heyford-Tibenham. Lt. Col. Jimmy Stewart – the actor – was his commander. The commander would fly his P-47s alongside the B-24s as they departed on a bombing mission into Germany, said Fetskos, who flew on 17 combat missions January through April 1945 as a left-gunner.

He was discharged from the Army Air Force in 1945 and settled in to civilian life, but was recalled to active duty in the Air Force in 1950 in the air-refueling field. For the next 25 years, Fetskos flew on KC-97s and later on KC-135s. As a boom operator, he was stationed at many different locations including Bermuda, Thailand, Newfoundland, England, and several locations in the United States. His service took him through the Korean War and Vietnam Conflict. During the Vietnam Conflict, Art flew on 41 combat missions.

In August 1975, with 28 years and 13 days of combined active duty, Fetskos retired from the Air Force at Pease Air Force Base, New Hampshire. He and his late wife, Helen, moved to Merritt Island near Patrick AFB in 1976. After being in their two-bedroom house for a while, his wife ordered him to "get out of the house and find something to do," said Fetskos. With that encouragement and direction, he visited the newly formed RAO where he said he found his new military home and went on to volunteer close to 12,000 hours. According to his co-volunteers, those hours are ones recorded – there could possibly be more than twice that number of actual hours devoted to the RAO. He enjoyed assisting retirees with obtaining their records, processing ID cards, and wading through other government issues.