

## **RASNIC, CHARLES RICHARD**

US Air Force

Vietnam

Major Charles Richard (Dick) Rasnic moved on to his eternal home on Sunday, May 19, 2019. Dick was born on August 4, 1935 in Pittsburg, Kansas to Charles H. (Hoot) and Irene Rasnic. He graduated from Pittsburg High School and joined the US Air Force when he was 19 as an enlisted man. After basic training, he was accepted to Officer Candidate School and became a highly decorated pilot, serving 4 tours in Vietnam and logging nearly 300 combat sorties. His first tour was in B-57 Canberra light attack bombers for the 8th bombardment liberty squadron out of Hill AFB, UT. He flew 240 night, low level attack missions including several as Chuck Yeager's wingman (the first man to exceed the speed of sound). Dick was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross, as well as numerous Air Medals and other awards for extraordinary achievement and valor in combat. He was elevated to test pilot and instructor pilot in B-57s before he was transferred to B-52s.

Vietnam tours 2 - 4 were with the 340th bomb squadron out of Eaker AFB in Blytheville, AR, where he commanded an additional 57 combat missions over the North and Hanoi. He was also elevated to instructor pilot in B-52s, and awarded the USAF's highest aeronautical rating of command pilot. He served as an alert mission pilot during the cold war. Following Vietnam, he was accepted to the Air Force Institute of Technology, receiving a Bachelor's Degree in Electrical Engineering, and was subsequently assigned to the 1840th Civil Engineering Squadron at Richards-Gebaur AFB in Kansas City, MO, where he eventually retired after over 22 years of service. He worked as an electrical engineer, plant manager and corporate pilot as a civilian until his second retirement, and then became a contractor at the tender age of 55. He was an active member of Piney Grove United Methodist Church. His exceptional wit and intelligence was surpassed only by his faith in God, inspiring all of those with whom he came into contact. Dick would have considered his numerous accomplishments negligible in the absence of leaving a legacy of faith and service for his family. He was a model husband, father, grandpa, leader and friend, who touched many with his kindness, humor and generosity.

In addition to his military service, he was a two-time regional heavyweight, golden gloves boxing champion and competed for the Air Force championship, losing only one fight. He won the National Master's Judo Championship in 1977 in the unlimited division.

He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Marlene; children, Russ (Marisa) Rasnic and Caylene (Jay) Reinsma; grandchildren, Kelli Ray and Lexi Rasnic; and great-grandchildren, Ella Parker, Jaxon Ray and Marryn Ray.

Visitation will be at 9:00 AM Thursday, May 23, 2019, at Piney Grove United Methodist Church, followed by a celebration of life service at 10:00 AM.

Interment will be in the Arkansas State Veterans Cemetery in North Little Rock, at 11:00 AM, Friday, May 24, 2019, under the direction of Davis-Smith Funeral Home, Hot Springs.