



**Hunn, Van T.**

1932-2022

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Van T. Hunn, U.S. Air Force Colonel Retired, 89, died Friday, Feb. 25, 2022, in Burleson.

Van was born in Fort Worth and grew up on the family farm in Boyd. Van joined the U.S. Air Force after getting his Associate of Arts degree from Arlington State College (now UT-Arlington). Van's military career spanned several overseas tours, including service as a Forward Air Controller in Vietnam, where he flew more than 500 missions. During August 1965 in Vietnam, Van saved hundreds of special forces and civilians. His plane was hit seven times. For his valor, Van was awarded the Silver Star.

While in the military, Van earned his bachelor's degree from Omaha University (now University of Nebraska at Omaha) and his master's degree from Boston University.

In addition to two tours at Clark AFB (Philippines), Van also served as an ICBM Crew Commander (Lincoln, Neb.), an Air Force Instructor Pilot, T-38s, (Del Rio)

and a NATO Inspector (Naples, Italy).

After he retired from the Air Force, Van was employed as a pilot for Bloxum Construction. Van later served as a pilot for Conquest Airlines, an Eastern Airlines commuter division out of St. Croix. Van was a master scuba diver and instructor. His diving included adventures in the Philippines, Italy, the Caribbean and the Marshall Islands. With his love of history and airplanes, Van founded an archaeological club in Naples, Italy, and also joined TIGHAR (The International Group of Historical Aircraft Recovery). He was the lead diver on multiple missions to find Amelia Earhart's airplane, as well as trips to the Marshall Islands where the team located two U.S. Navy TBD Devastator planes that were lost during World War II. Van was a proud descendant of S. Rhoads Fisher (Secretary of the Texas Navy and a signer of the Texas Declaration of Independence). Van was an Admiral in the Texas Navy and a member of the Sons of the Republic of Texas. He was an avid marathon runner and hiker, spending much time on the trails of his beloved Guadalupe Mountains, including hiking the peak many times (twice while he was in his 80s). Van was a talented craftsman, restoring numerous antique cars and trucks and creating beloved personal gifts for his offspring and friends.

Van's volunteerism and philanthropic contributions included services at the Fort Worth Nature Center, Children's University in Arlington, Northstar School in Arlington, and building a school in the Marshall Islands. Van loved life and believed in living life to its fullest. He instilled in his children and grandchildren a deep love of nature, the outdoors, and history.

Van was preceded in death by his former wife, Clair; his mother, Reba, his father, O.W., his stepfather, Toney; his brothers, Donald, Toney Robert, Jack and Terry and stepdaughter Jennifer (Jeff).

Surviving Van are his wife, Ann; daughter, Becky of Mansfield; son, David (Kay) of Kennedale; daughter, Jennifer (Megan) of Mansfield; sister, Mary Ann (Bob) of Azle; brother, Russell of Dallas, grandchildren, Dayton, Kellie, Krystal Clair, Jaxton, Dalton, Maddox and Parker; stepgrandchildren, Lauren, William, Wilson, Robert and Jasmine; stepdaughters, Tabitha Stewart and Catherine Jeffrey (James) of Fredericksburg; former wife, Jane Hunn of Fort Worth; as well as many beloved nieces and nephews, cousins, friends and colleagues.

In remembrance of Van's life, the family asks that any charitable donations be made to Northstar School 4620 Park Springs Blvd. Arlington, Texas 76017.

A celebration of Van's life and his legacy will be held at a later date.