



Colonel Robert "Bob" Ralph Manuel

FEB 3, 1931 - FEB 24, 2025



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Our beloved father L/Colonel Robert (Bob) Ralph Manuel, 94, of Fort Myers, Florida, passed away peacefully on February 24, 2025. Born February 3, 1931, in Dubuque, Iowa, he was the son of Earl and Theodora (Hafner) Manuel and the brother of JoAnn Lundquist who preceded him in death. He graduated from Dubuque Senior High School in 1949 and the U.S. Naval Academy in 1953. On April 5, 1954, he married the former Isobel Christine (Chris) Walton of Westborough, Massachusetts, who preceded him in death in 2013.

Colonel Manuel served 24 years in the U.S. Air Force. During his active duty, he performed in a variety of positions that included navigator, pilot, engineer, systems analyst, and program manager. He earned his master's degree in industrial engineering from Texas Tech University in 1963. He was a member of Phi Kappa Phi and Sigma Xi and became a registered professional engineer in the state of Texas. Colonel Manuel was both a senior navigator with approximately 1100 flying hours and a command pilot with over 3500 hours. He served in Vietnam as a lead and instructor pilot in the C-130 aircraft. His last assignments were in the Pentagon as a study supervisor, and at Wright-Patterson AFB as chief engineer for the Air Force Cruise Missile Program and as Deputy Director of Engineering.

Following his Air Force retirement in 1977, while still living in Dayton, Ohio, Bob worked with several major aerospace companies, including Rolls-Royce Limited, as both a consultant and marketing representative to the Department of Defense and NASA. In 1990 he and Chris moved from Dayton to Sanibel Island, Florida, where they thoroughly enjoyed their home adjacent to the beach. In 2000 they moved to Loudon, Tennessee, then to Asheville, North Carolina in 2007. As a retired officer, Colonel Manuel was quick to share that he had lived in 15 different homes in 8 different states during his lifetime.

Bob's passion was gardening and landscaping as he greatly enjoyed working outdoors in his various yards maintaining beautiful lawns, carefully manicured hedges, and abundant flower beds. He was an avid reader and loved to compete at Duplicate Bridge. "BobPa", as he was lovingly



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called by his grandchildren, took an active role in their lives by sharing advice on life skills, taking them to the beach, playing board games, and outdoor activities. He often spoke of his formative years in Dubuque and remembered his high school days as a wonderful, exciting time. He was a four-year varsity athlete in football and track.

Bob is survived by his second wife Ancie Leigh of Asheville, North Carolina, his three sons, Lee of Coral Gables, Florida, Larry (Patty) of San Diego, California, Dana (Nellie) of Cedar Park, Texas, and his daughter, Laura Hatfield (Steve) of Fort Myers, Florida. Four grandchildren, Samantha (Andrew) Jennings, Alexandra Heare, Zachary Manuel, and Isabella Manuel. Three great-grandchildren Ava Jennings, Parker Jennings, and Evelyn Rodriguez. Cousin Lois Long, Niece Susan Jones, and Nephew Tom Lundquist.

A private memorial service will be held on Saturday, April 5, 2025, at the Fort Myers Memorial Gardens Funeral Home in Fort Myers, Florida. Those desiring may make contributions to the Alumni Association, U.S. Naval Academy, Annapolis, Maryland.



Tribute Wall

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Anonymous sent a Beautiful in Blue to the Manuel family.



April 4 at 10:42 AM



Anonymous sent a Memorial Honor Blanket to the Manuel family.



April 2 at 9:32 AM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Robert "Bob" by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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