



Major Joseph "Joe" Alexander McNeill, Jr.

February 9, 1937 - July 25, 2016

Major Joseph "Joe" Alexander McNeill, Jr., 79, died surrounded by his family on July 25, in Kentfield, Calif. He proudly served his country as a Master Navigator, Vietnam veteran, and career Air Force officer.

Joe was born on Feb. 9, 1937 in Somerville, MA to Joseph Alexander McNeill and Agnes Bridget Beatrice Donnelly. He was the youngest of three siblings, his brother, Daniel Francis, sister Margaret "Peggy" Helen, and their half-sister Claire Francis McNeill. His parents were children of Irish immigrants, his paternal grandmother Annie Tracy Murray from Cushendall, Antrim and grandfather Daniel Francis McNeill from Ballycastle, Antrim; his maternal grandparents James Donnelly and Mary E. Silk were from Kiltulla, Roscommon, Ireland.

Educated in Catholic schools, St. Anne's in Somerville and Christopher Columbus HS in Boston, he graduated in 1958 with a BA from Providence College in Rhode Island. His friends included Lenny Wilkens and John Thompson from the basketball team and he remained a dedicated Friars' fan. At his 50th reunion, "Satchmo" and his college buddies picked up as if no time had passed.

Returning to Somerville after graduation, he married the love of his life, Frances Jean Butler in Sept. 1958 and began a career teaching in Somerville.

After the birth of his daughter, Leslie Anne, he joined the Air Force and moved his family to Texas for Officer Training and Navigation School. His son Joseph "Jose" Alexander McNeill, III joined the family at Harlingen AFB. Mather AFB was next for Advanced Navigator Bombardier Training. Joe's first assignment was the 7th Squadron at McChord AFB on C-124s, later to the 22nd Military Airlift Command at Travis AFB and C-141s. Joe served in Vietnam and then moved with his family to Hawaii, where he worked on mission planning at Hickam AFB, residing on Wheeler AFB.

Moving to Vacaville, California in 1976, Joe realized a long-held dream to run a restaurant when he managed the Travis AFB Officer's Club. In his 20 years of service, he worked in many roles from navigating Air Force Two for Lyndon B. Johnson and an unofficial trip to China before Nixon, to missions and planning and his role on the advisory staff to the South Korean military.

Joe retired from the Air Force in 1981, starting a career in real estate as an agent and eventually building McNeill Real Estate with his son. He returned to his original profession at Solano Community College. He loved teaching real estate and his classes were popular and packed.

Ill health forced him to retire from teaching. He always faced challenges with a positive attitude and a strong will; his response to the doctors was always "fix it." When dialysis finally failed in 2016, he slipped away peacefully.

Joe is survived by his wife of 58 years, Frances; daughter, Leslie; son, Jose (Stacey Kopp) McNeill; two beloved grandsons, Joseph Alexander McNeill IV and Connor Patrick McNeill; brother, Daniel Francis (Mallie Fannie Katz) McNeill; brother-in-law, Paul Kidder; and nieces, Lydia Tamar McNeill Campanella, Rebecca Veronica McNeill Vousboukis, and Kathleen Kidder Calkins.

A memorial service with full military honors will be held at 10:30 a.m. Friday, Aug. 5, at Sacramento Valley National Cemetery, 5810 Midway Road, Dixon, CA.

In lieu of flowers, please thank a veteran for his or her service.

Arrangements entrusted to the direction and care of Twin Chapels Mortuary, Vallejo 707-552-6696, www.TwinChapelsMortuary.com

Cemetery Details

Sacramento Valley VA National Cemetery

5810 Midway Road
Dixon, CA 95620

Previous Events

Service

AUG 5. 10:30 AM (PT)

Sacramento Valley VA National Cemetery
5810 Midway Road
Dixon, CA 95620

Tribute Wall



“ *Beautiful in Blue* was purchased for the family of Major Joseph "Joe" Alexander McNeill, Jr..



August 04, 2016 at 04:16 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum* was purchased for the family of Major Joseph "Joe" Alexander McNeill, Jr..



August 03, 2016 at 01:45 PM



“ *3 files added to the album New Album Name*



Jose McNeill - July 29, 2016 at 07:07 PM

GM

Family and friends of Joe,

I went to Christopher Columbus HS - class of 58- and I was from Somerville too and I had a couple of military tours in Vietnam also. Joe and I must must have bumped into each other while attending CC. Sorry for your loss. Sounds like Joe had a wonderful life and a close knit family. Your loss is heavens gain, but I know he looking down loving at you all.

*With my condolences,,
George Mason . .*

George Mason - August 15, 2016 at 08:27 AM