



## Ben McWilliams

October 26, 1937 - January 9, 2025

U.S. Army Retired, Major Ben McWilliams Jr answered his Lord's muster call on January 9th, 2025. Ben was born in Grandfield, Oklahoma to Ben McWilliams and Norene Dorothy (Cox) McWilliams on October 26, 1937. Ben was a proud life member of the Veterans of Foreign War Post 2025 and a member of MOAA (Military Officers Association of America).

Ben proudly served his country as a member of the US Army from July 1959 to August 1979. He completed basic training at Ft. Ord, CA and Combat Engineer training at Ft. Leonard Wood, MO. He voluntarily enlisted in 1959 and served one year in the 23rd Armored Engineer Battalion in Germany. He requested and received order to report to Infantry Officer Candidate School (OCS) at Ft. Benning, GA.

Upon graduation from OCS, he was commissioned as an Engineer 2nd Lieutenant. He completed the Engineer Officer Basic Course at Ft. Belvoir, VA. As an engineer officer, he had the following assignments: the 864th Engineer Battalion in Camp Wolters, TX, where in 1963 his unit (B/864th) was sent to Camps Tuto and Century in Greenland for 5 months and 26 days to do construction projects; he was the engineer advisor to two engineer units in Hawaii, the 411th Engineer Battalion and the 449th Post Engineer detachment; he had two tours in Vietnam, first (in late 1967-1968) as the Commander of B Company, 84th Engineer Battalion and second (June 1972 – 1973) as an advisor to Vietnam Public Works Chief; he finished his military career with a third tour at Ft. Leonard Wood, MO where he was the

Headquarters Company Commander and Headquarters Commandant, retiring as a Major.

After retiring, he continued to live in Rolla and went back to work at Ft. Leonard Wood where he filled the following positions: Training Developer for the Engineer School; the Plans and Mobilization Officer for the 1st Engineer Brigade; and the Installation Force Modernization Officer; and finally retiring in 1999 as the Branch Chief of Officer and Warrant Officer training courses and various enlisted courses at the Engineer School.

Ben was preceded in death by his father, Ben McWilliams; his mother, Norene Dorothy (Cox) McWilliams; and his first wife of 30 years, and mother of his sons Todd & Shawn, Janet Marie (Shoffner) McWilliams, and nephew Kirk Smith. He is survived by his second wife of 30 years, Doris Jean (Field) McWilliams; two sons, Todd (Gina) and Shawn (Liesl); two step daughters, Karilee (Field) Mayer and Kirsten (Field) Peterson; 7 grandchildren, Nicole McWilliams, Lauren (Travis) Thacher, Seth (Kandace Tressler) McWilliams, Ben (Hannah) McWilliams, Shawn Jacob McWilliams, Ian McWilliams, and David McWilliams; 2 Step grandchildren Michael Miller and Cameron Peterson; sister Betty (McWilliams) Davis; great grandchildren Zyair & Aunesti McWilliams, Bailey, Presley, and Oakleigh Thacher, and Xander McWilliams; and Niece Kim Davis.

In lieu of flowers please consider a donation to Tunnels to Towers Foundation in memory/honor of Ben McWilliams Jr. cards are available at all James & Gahr locations If you will (want to), please follow the directions to send an e-card to mcwill31@yahoo.com and those will be shared with the family (this can even be done anonymously).

Funeral services will be held on Friday, January 17, 2025 at the Immanuel Lutheran Church in Rolla, Missouri at 12:00 PM. Visitation will be held at the Church on Friday prior to the service from 10:30 AM until service time. There will be a service with military honors at the Ft. Leonard Wood Veterans Cemetery in Waynesville, Missouri at 3:00PM.



# Cemetery Details

## FT. Leonard Wood VA Cemetery

Waynesville, MO

# Previous Events

## Visitation

JAN 17. 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM (CT)

Immanuel Lutheran Church  
801 W 11th Street  
Rolla, MO 65401

## Service

JAN 17. 12:00 PM (CT)

Immanuel Lutheran Church  
801 W 11th Street  
Rolla, MO 65401

## Military Honors

JAN 17. 3:00 PM (CT)

FT. Leonard Wood VA Cemetery  
Waynesville, MO

# Tribute Wall



“ *I am very grateful for Ben's service, and very appreciative for the wisdom and insight which he shared with me. Strandberg*

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**Richard Strandberg** - January 17, 2025 at 11:25 AM



“ *Beautiful Heart Bouquet was purchased for the family of Ben McWilliams.*



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January 16, 2025 at 01:53 AM