



Donald Joseph Boushelle

November 17, 1946 - March 31, 2019

Donald (“Joe”) Boushelle, of Metamora, MI passed away peacefully on March 31, 2019. He was surrounded by his family at Flint McLaren Hospital. Joe was born on November 17, 1946. He was the son of the late Donald F. Boushelle and Tyyne Maria Olkkonen.

Joe served his country courageously as an Air Force Pararescueman during the Vietnam War. He volunteered numerous times to extend his tour of duty and during his time there was awarded a Silver Star for Gallantry in Action. While stationed at Danang, Joe was sent on a mission near the A Shau Valley to rescue the survivors of six downed American helicopters. According to the citation, his helicopter took heavy enemy gunfire, which Joe returned with his M-60 machine gun providing cover for his helicopter and the survivors on the ground. Fully exposed to enemy gunfire and without regard to his own safety, he proceeded to assist the flight engineer in bringing the survivors onboard. He then rendered medical assistance to the survivors, saving the life of one U.S. Marine whose leg was almost severed.

In addition to the Silver Star, he was awarded two Distinguished Flying Crosses and eleven Air Medals for his actions. He also served in support of the Apollo 11 lunar landing mission, where he helped retrieve the flight crew from the Pacific Ocean following their return to earth.

After returning to Michigan, Joe worked for General Motors for his entire career. Despite his heroism, Joe was a kind, humble, and unassuming man.

Joe is survived by his brothers Gary (Sharon) and William (Tonie), sons Joseph (Karen) and Jeremy (Vicki) and five grandchildren Celia, Marie-Genevieve, Vincent, Joseph and Vivienne.

A burial ceremony will take place at Great Lakes National Cemetery in Holly, MI on May 10, 2019 at 10am.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the American Kidney Fund or Soldiers' Angels.

Cemetery Details

Great Lakes National Cemetery

Holly, MI

Previous Events

Graveside Service

MAY 10. 10:00 AM (ET)

Great Lakes National Cemetery
Holly, MI

Tribute Wall



“ I worked with Joe at the Quality Standards Lab, General Motors Truck, in Pontiac. Joe was such a nice and caring guy. Loved working with him and knowing him. I am sorry to hear of his passing and send my prayers to his family. I am proud to have known him and call him my friend.

Rick LaFay

Rick LaFay - April 13, 2019 at 08:41 PM

TB

“ Joe will be missed very much by all. There is a void in our lives and an emptiness, but I know he is in God's hands now and is safe. He was a true Patriot and I have always been very proud of him.

Tonie Boushelle
Tucson, Arizona

Tonie Boushelle - April 10, 2019 at 02:05 PM

WB

“ Because of our geographical distance from where we lived Joe and I spent many hours on the phone talking about brother stuff. Topics ranged from his 1965 Malibu with a 3/4 race cam and solids, his sons and their wives, his 5 grandchildren who he would with great pride tell me their names each time he spoke of them, he spoke ever so fondly of his friends who were with him throughout his life... Even until the end. Our brother Gary and I wish to thank Larry & Donna and Tom & Kim for being there for Joe in his time of need. Joe loved all of you.

Joe served our country with the highest distinction in the United States Air Force. During the time Joe was at DaNang Air Base in Vietnam his dedication to duty as a PJ saved many American servicemens lives. When he returned home from Vietnam, he was stationed at Pease AFB, New Hampshire where he continued his PJ skills for the civilian community. Joe was justly honored. He was the real deal. A true American Patriot his whole life.

William Bruce Boushelle
Tucson, Arizona



William Bruce Boushelle - April 09, 2019 at 08:38 PM

GA

Worked at GM with Joe a extra special person to have been associated with. Never known what his background was but you just had the feeling this guy was one of a kind.

gary abraham - April 13, 2019 at 10:46 PM

WB

“ 1 file added to the album Memories Album



William Bruce Boushelle - April 09, 2019 at 07:54 PM

HM

“ *Rest Peacefully Joe!*
sending comfort & hugs to Jeremy, Joey, & family & family ♡♡

Heather Mills - April 05, 2019 at 11:31 AM

BB

“ *A good man and a real hero. Rest In Peace, Joe.*
Bill Biebuyck

Bill Biebuyck - April 04, 2019 at 02:02 PM

RL

“ *Joe I have known you my entire life. You have and always will be a hero to me. Thank you for your service and all you did. You will always have a spot in my heart. RIP*

Ryan Lake - April 03, 2019 at 07:22 PM

R(

“ *My Deepest Sympathy and Condolences for Joe's family and friends.*
No greater loving man
Always in my heart.
Robin Mills Soule and family

Robin Soule (Mills) - April 03, 2019 at 03:26 PM



“ *My family and I were neighbors of Joe for many years here in Ortonville. He was always there for us when we needed him, during power outages or storms when Julie was home alone here with the kids. We never forgot his kind, understated willingness to help. So it was no surprise when I saw this dedication to him:*

https://www.newspapers.com/clip/14886677/the_portsmouth_herald/

https://www.newspapers.com/clip/14886778/st_louis_postdispatch/

http://www.rotorheadsrus.us/documents/1968__1973.html

Our deepest condolences to Joe's son and his family and friends.

Sincerely,

Don, Julie, Donnie, Adam, and Emma Richmond

Donald Richmond - April 01, 2019 at 08:10 PM