



## Dr. Colonel Gary Richard Rockwood

January 15, 2020

Dr. Colonel Gary Richard Rockwood, 76, of Surprise, Arizona, peacefully passed away on January 15, 2020. He was born on September 10, 1943, and grew up in Seattle, Washington. After graduating high school, Gary enlisted in the Army, attended college and graduated from Officer's Candidate School.

Gary married Betty Jane "B.J." Davis in 1966. They had three children together. They divorced in 1986. Gary met his soulmate Patricia "Tish" Pruett and they married in 1987. They enjoyed 30 years of shenanigans and travel before Tish died in 2017. Gary was also preceded in death by his mother Evelyn Ehlers.

Gary's 30 years of service in the U.S. Army took him all over the world, from Seattle, Washington to California, Okinawa, Indiana, Germany, Hawaii, Korea, D.C., and Japan. He began his military career serving two tours in Vietnam, during which time he was awarded the bronze star for heroism. Gary retired from the Army as Full Colonel in Hawaii. His second career was in the Hawaii tourism industry as Director of Human Resources with the Prince Hotels on Oahu, then with The Mauna Kea & Hapuna Beach Resorts on the Big Island. During this time, he also received his Ph.D. in Business Management from USC.

Gary was an avid runner, fulfilling his dream of participating in (and finishing!)

the Honolulu Marathon. He also enjoyed swimming and playing racquetball; however, golfing was a favorite activity for him. Gary was a kind and gentle soul who cherished his 4-legged buddies and knew no strangers. He had a knack for making friends anywhere and everywhere with his easy laid-back personality, twinkling blue eyes, and contagious chuckle. He was a mentor, a confidante, a true friend. He modeled service above self, the essence of the "Aloha Spirit", and the importance of people & communities working together. He was an inspiration to all who knew him. Gary left this world a better place.

Gary's surviving family includes his parents Richard and Hazel Rockwood; his children Kimberley Rockwood, Gary Rockwood Jr (wife Kim), Mark Rockwood (wife Holly); his grandchildren Amanda, Georgia, Gary III, Audrey; his great-grandchildren Makenzi, Lauren, Noelle; step-children Myki Williamson, Michael "Chael" Pruet (wife Lee), Ashlie O'Reilly (husband Bill); step-grandchildren Lucy, Charlie, Amelia, Finn, Connor, Cameron; brother Dennis (wife Sharon); sister Cindy (husband Rich); step-sisters Patty and Roberta; brothers & sisters-in-law; aunts & uncles, cousins, nieces & nephews; his devoted caregiver Preston and many dear friends. We all miss him very much.

A private memorial celebrating his life will be held at a later date in Hawaii.

In lieu of flowers, we invite you to donate in honor of Veterans and/or to your local animal shelter and/or to Hospice of the Valley in Peoria, AZ.

# Tribute Wall

DM

“ Gary, I'll always remember our fun times and conversations we had at Mauna Kea and Hapuna, and the drinks we shared at Kwaihae with Tish and Melora. You'll always be a big part of my gratitude 🙏 and joy in Hawaii. Thanks for taking Cory golfing! Dr Sue McCann Aloha nui loa!

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**Dr Sue McCann** - March 20, 2024 at 08:01 PM

RL

“ I am going to miss my Army buddy! Got to know him well while he served in Japan and Hawaii, and later in his civilian career with Sheraton Hotels and Mauna Kea Resorts. Always a friend you can count on..... Tish too. Many do not know he was inducted into the Infantry Officer Candidate School Hall of Fame in 2007. Gary was recognized for his exemplary service in the Army from Private to Colonel but he did not “toot his horn” about this award. Out of the millions of soldiers that have served in the US Army, only a handful have received Hall of Fame status. You are back with Tish and we shall meet again on the other side. Robert G. Lee Major General US Army (Retired)

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**Robert G. Lee** - January 25, 2020 at 12:05 AM

JK

“ Going to miss you RIP

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**Jay Konen** - January 22, 2020 at 03:26 PM

DD

*“ Gary & Tish we’re close friends of ours. We lived next door to each other and golfed a lot together. In tournaments our shirts had “The Neighbors” on the back. We will cherish our memories of him and have peace knowing he’s reunited with Tish. I look forward to seeing him again some day. He will always be with us. He really loved his children and was proud of his Grandchildren.*

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**Donna & Danny** - January 21, 2020 at 10:16 PM

KH

*“ May your memories of Gary bring you peace during this difficult time. It is an honor to assist your family through this process.*

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**Karle Henderson** - January 20, 2020 at 04:10 PM