

LTC Donald E. Jones



07-28-1937 - 03-19-2026

Lieutenant Colonel Donald Earl Jones, age 88, passed away peacefully on March 19, 2026, in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. He was born on July 28, 1937, in Memphis, Tennessee, to Philip F. Jones and Dolly Alma Kirkland Jones.

Donald was preceded in death by his parents; his sister, Patricia Jennings; his brother, Freeman Jones; and his beloved son, Keith Jones.

On August 2, 1955, Donald married the love of his life, Nadine N. Norton. Together they built a life centered on faith, family, service, and adventure. They were blessed with three children: LaDonna Kimble, Keith Jones, and Kerry Southwick.

Shortly after his marriage, Donald attended Memphis State University, where he joined the Air Force ROTC program. He earned a bachelor's degree in mathematics and later a master's degree in education. Following graduation, he proudly served in the United States Air Force from 1959 until his retirement in 1981 as a Lieutenant Colonel.

Donald was a distinguished pilot whose courage and dedication earned him numerous honors during his service in Vietnam, including the Meritorious Service Medal, the Distinguished Flying Cross, and the Air Medal. He retired from the Air Force at Fort Riley, Kansas, and made his home in Manhattan, Kansas, for the next 44 years.

Following his military retirement, Donald continued serving others through his work in life insurance and later as a commissioned private pilot for Briggs Automotive in Manhattan, Kansas. He and Nadine greatly enjoyed traveling, skiing, dancing, and fishing together throughout their retirement years.

A man of deep faith, Donald was an active and devoted member of First Baptist Church in Manhattan, Kansas. In his later years, as his health declined, he moved to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, to be closer to his family.

Donald leaves behind a loving family who will cherish his memory: his devoted wife of more than 70 years, Nadine Jones; his daughters, LaDonna Kimble and Kerry Southwick; his grandchildren, Cassandra (Long) Grizzle, Dr. Brad Long, and Alex Long; and his great-grandchildren, Chloe Grizzle and Landon Livingston.

A memorial service honoring the life of Lieutenant Colonel Donald Earl Jones will be held at 1:00 p.m. on May 25, 2026, at First Indian Baptist Church.

He will be remembered for his unwavering devotion to his country, his faith, and most importantly, his family. His legacy of service, strength, and love will live on in all who knew him.