



## Ralph Tomlinson

December 26, 1946 - April 25, 2019

Ralph F. Tomlinson, age 72, of Grove, OK passed away on Thursday, April 25, 2019 at Integris Grove Hospital after battling cancer.

Ralph was born on December 26, 1946 to Joseph and Ruth (Forster) Tomlinson in Osceola, IA. He grew up in Manly, IA and graduated from North Central High School.

After high school, Ralph attended Westmar College in LeMars, IA and received a Bachelor's of Science. While there he met the love of his life, Suzanne Dudley, and on May 31, 1968, they were married in Humboldt, IA. Upon receiving his degree he enlisted in the U.S. Air Force and proudly served for 20 years in 6 different countries, eventually retiring as a Lt Colonel. During his time in the service he was a pilot flying a KC-135 refueling tanker in the Vietnam War. He later flew a B-52 for Strategic Air Command out of Fairchild AFB in Spokane, WA. Ralph was later stationed at Blytheville AR and Presque Isle, ME.

Continuing his education, Ralph received a Master's in Computer Science from Boston University.

Towards the end of his military career, he was stationed at Offutt AFB in Bellevue, NE and served as a computer consultant for Strategic Air Command Headquarters.

Upon "retirement", Ralph began teaching Computer Science at the University of Nebraska, Omaha and then Iowa State University in Ames, IA. He also became active in the Civil Air Patrol, the Air Force Auxiliary, doing search and

rescue and served as the Iowa Wing Commander for 4 years. From the Department of the Army, Ralph was given the Army Commander's Award for Civilian Service Medal, the highest honor that a civilian can earn.

In 2008, Ralph and his wife enrolled in the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary and served assisting Iowans during the floods of 2008 and 2013. He also spent many hours teaching both the Coast Guard Auxiliary members and the public in boating safety and specialty classes. Ralph was also deployed for flood rescue in Fargo, ND and Deep Horizons Recovery after Hurricane Katrina. Most recently, Ralph was recognized by the Iowa State House of Representatives with House Resolution 10 for his many years of service and contributions to Iowa.

Even with all these accomplishments, Ralph was a humble man, never searching for attention or notoriety. A kind and quiet gentleman, being a public servant was what he enjoyed most. He leaves a legacy of kindness and selflessness that is rarely seen today.

The couple moved to Grove full-time in 2018 and attended the First United Methodist Church.

He is preceded in death by his parents and one infant brother.

Left to carry on his legacy: wife, Suzanne Tomlinson of Grove; son, Christopher Tomlinson and wife, Susan and grandson, Theodore, all of Henderson, NV. Brothers: Joel Tomlinson and wife, Deb of Stratford, WI and Ron Tomlinson and wife, Lyn of Marshfield, WI and many nieces and nephews.

In Grove, visitation will be held at 1pm Tuesday, April 30, 2019 followed by Funeral services at 2pm, both at Nichols-Stephens Funeral & Cremation Services. A service in Iowa will be on Saturday, May 4th, 2019 at Faith United Methodist Church in Humboldt Iowa, with the visitation from 12 to 2 and the memorial service at 2pm with refreshments following. Arrangements entrusted to Nichols-Stephens Funeral & Cremation Services. Online condolences may be made at [www.nicholsfuneralandcremation.com](http://www.nicholsfuneralandcremation.com).



# Previous Events

## Visitation

APR **30**. 1:00 PM (CT)

Nichols-Stephens Funeral and Cremation Service  
10201 U.S. Highway 59  
Grove, OK 74344  
(918) 786-6761  
[nicholsfunerals@yahoo.com](mailto:nicholsfunerals@yahoo.com)

# Tribute Wall



“ *Ralph Tomlinson*

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October 04, 2023 at 03:23 PM



“ *To the Tomlinson family,*

*I was saddened to see in the Westmar Alumni Newsletter about the passing of Ralph. I was a freshman at Westmar in 1967 when I became friends with him, living on the same floor of Memorial Hall. He was a fantastic person who helped ease me through the transition into college life. Although I did not maintain any contact with him after leaving Westmar, the remembrances of his friendship stayed with me through all these years. I am so glad to have known him and extend my sincere sympathy to his family.*

*John Gible, Lebanon, PA*

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**John Gible** - December 05, 2019 at 09:16 PM



“ *After years of not seeing Ralph, I was fortunate to visit with him at our last class reunion. He certainly lived a life of service and accomplishments.*

*With sympathy to all of his family,*

*Ruth Mueller Barnett*

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**Ruth E Barnett** - May 01, 2019 at 08:38 PM