



Edward Walter Gmyrek

January 12, 1943 - August 9, 2023

Lt. Col. Edward W. Gmyrek (USAF Ret.) of The Villages, FL departed this life on August 9, 2023.

Ed was preceded in death by his parents, Walter E. Gmyrek and Josephine B. Gmyrek, brother, Walter Edward Gmyrek, Jr., and sister, Rose Baert.

Ed is survived by his loving wife of 27 years, Gayle Gmyrek. His sons William Gmyrek and Douglas (Amy) Gmyrek; brother, Daniel (Patricia) Gmyrek; grandsons Alex Gmyrek, Nathan Gmyrek and granddaughter Natalie Gmyrek. In addition, he is survived by a special Uncle Joseph Gmyrek; cousins Nancy Place, Lynne Weston, Colynne Kelly, Shirley Squires, and many friends.

Edward was born in Greenfield, Massachusetts; moving to Bernadston when he was about 6 years old. Eventually the family moved to North Miami Beach, Florida where Ed attended Miami Norland High School. He was a standout athlete on both the football and baseball teams. He graduated in 1961 with a full athletic scholarship to Ohio Northern University where he played football for 4 years. He was also a member of Sigma Phi Epsilon (Ohio Alpha) at ONU and he remained active in the Alumni association throughout his life.

After graduating in 1965 with a Bachelor's Degree in Education, Ed taught for a couple of years before joining the United States Air Force in 1967. After Officer Candidate School (OCS), basic and advanced flight training, he was assigned to flying the C-141 transports based out of Summerville, SC.

Following that tour of duty Ed transitioned to rotary wing (helicopters), flying the HH-43B Husky and eventually the MH-53 Super Jolly Green Giant. He

specialized in Search and Rescue, eventually flying a tour with the First Special Ops Wing. Ed also served stents as an instructor for the Air Force OCS program in San Antonio as well as doing developmental flying at Langley AFB to bring night vision goggles and GPS technology to fruition. His career culminated with the command of the 601st Tactical Control Wing (heavy lift helicopters) based in Sembach Air Base in West Germany in the mid-1980's. His final tour of duty brought him to Marietta, Georgia where he was the Assistant Commander of the Civil Air Patrol. Ed retired from the Air Force in 1989 after more than 22 years of service.

Ed joined Eastern Airlines as a pilot for a few years. He then returned to college where he earned both a Master's Degree in Mathematics Education and a Specialist Degree in Education. He finished his many and varied careers as a middle school math teacher in Dallas, GA. Retired from teaching, he and Gayle moved to The Villages. Ed was an avid golfer and even played in the US Senior Nationals in 2005.

A memorial service will be held at the Georgia National Cemetery in Canton, GA. August 16, 2023 at 10:00AM.

Previous Events

Memorial Service

AUG **16**. 10:00 AM (ET)

Georgia National Cemetery
2025 Mount Carmel Church Lane
Canton, GA 30114

Tribute Wall

SW

“ Ed was Norland's first super star football player graduating in 1961
Norland's first graduating class.

Ed after a great career at Ohio Northern served the USA with honor.

I was in 9th grade in 1961 and remember Ed's superstar skill.

Rest in peace!!!

Stuart Weinstein - July 10, 2025 at 08:57 AM



“ I would like to express my belated condolences to the family and friends of Lt. Col. Edward Gymrek. I knew him as the Squadron Commander of the 601st Tactical Air Support Squadron in West Germany at Sembach Air Base, where I was stationed as a helicopter crew chief. I can truly say that he was beloved and respected by everyone in that unit.

I am especially proud of my personal experiences as a CH-53 Crew Chief under his command. Col. Gymrek not only wrote a letter of appreciation to me and approved an Air Force Achievement Medal at the end of my tour in W. Germany, but paid me the greatest compliment in my Air Force career by selecting my helicopter for his final flight as Squadron Commander for the 601st TASS.

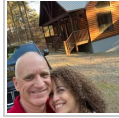
I will forever remember that flight because of the fantastic skills of Col. Gymrek at the controls. After a beautiful 2 hour flight of taking several personnel from the various Sembach AB units that supported us for a wonderful sightseeing tour of the surrounding countryside, we landed and let everyone off except for two flight engineers and myself (if memory serves).

We flew for 2 more hours all over the Rhineland of West Germany, swooping down along rivers, rolling in and out of valleys, circling castles, and having more fun than we should have. That day I learned what an H-53 can REALLY do with a highly skilled, experienced pilot at the controls. It remains one of the most incredible experiences of my life.

Thank you, Col. Gymrek for putting your trust in me, and my helicopter. It was a distinct honor and a rare privilege to have been under your command.

*SSGT Eric Hornquist
601 TASS*

Eric Hornquist - March 10, 2025 at 07:27 PM



Forgive me for the misspelling of Col. Gmyrek's name. I realized it just as I sent the message. My sincerest apologies.

Eric Hornquist - March 10, 2025 at 07:33 PM

JG

“ I had the pleasure of working in then Captain Gmyrek's unit at RAF Upper Heyford England. I remember him as being funny and honest. He played football for the Base team winning the European Championship. My deepest sympathy to his family.

Johnny Green. SMSgt Retired

Johnny Green - August 22, 2023 at 08:21 PM

BL

“ How fortunate we are to have Ed for our neighbor! His greeting, smile, and wave to us across the way as we arrived or left our home gave us such joy. While speaking with Ed we felt his gentleness. When reading Ed's obituary we found that we knew a man of many careers, adventure, and a love for education. We thank Ed for his service. Ed symbolizes the greatness and achievement of the accomplishments life has to offer.



Bill & Shirley Lovell - August 12, 2023 at 10:43 AM

GG

“ Gayle Gmyrek sent a virtual gift in memory of Edward Walter Gmyrek



Gayle Gmyrek - August 12, 2023 at 07:39 AM

LG

“ Lynda Gayle Gmyrek lit a candle in memory of Edward Walter Gmyrek



Lynda Gayle Gmyrek - August 12, 2023 at 07:35 AM

EH

“ I do not have a personal memory of Ed but after reading his obituary I feel a connection some how; as a fellow educator and having a father who was also named Ed and flew for the Air Force as a Jolly Green Giant. He also specialized in Search and Rescue. What an adventurous life this man lead. Bless him for his service to his country and the students, who are the future. Prayers for comfort and peace to his precious family.

Elizabeth Hensley - August 12, 2023 at 03:08 AM

KM

“ Spending time with this very kind and gentle man for the past 2 years was a blessing every day. His great sense of humor was always the bright light of the day. Thankyou Gayle. Love you both.
Kathy



Kathy McIntyre - August 11, 2023 at 07:07 PM

GP

“ I met Ed through his wife Gayle in the late 1990s as Gayle and I taught school together. Gayle was finishing up a teaching career and I was just beginning mine. I played golf with Ed often before he retired and moved to The Villages in Florida. I will never forget playing golf at the old Royal Oaks Golf Course outside of Cartersville Ga with Ed and he shot his first ever even par 70. Ed was always such a joy to be around and many of the golf lessons he provided me have been passed down to my 2 boys. Prayers Gayle and family! Gary Plunkett

Gary Plunkett - August 11, 2023 at 04:12 PM