



## Robert Matthews

April 25, 1931 - October 26, 2017

Robert Matthews, Jr., 86, of Fruitland Park, Florida, passed away Thursday, October 26, 2017. Bob was born in Poughkeepsie, New York, to Robert Matthews, Sr., and Lydia Matthews, on April 25, 1931. Bob graduated from Roosevelt High School in Hyde Park, NY, in 1948 and enlisted in the Air Force in August of 1950. His first assignment was at Tyndall A.F.B. FL. While stationed there, he met Bobbette Sullivan from Chipley, FL, and they were married. They raised 4 children, Linda Polcari (Joe), Karen Taylor (Mickey), Cliff Matthews (Nanette) and Sam Matthews (Barbara) who subsequently increased the family with 12 grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren with number 19 on the way. He was predeceased by his parents and his brother, Gregory John, "Jack" Matthews. While stationed at Tyndall, he was sent to Lowry A.F.B. in Denver, CO and trained as a radar mechanic on B-36's. After completing his training, he was stationed at Limestone A.F.B. in Maine until he took an early discharge in 1953 and returned home to Clinton Hollow, NY where he worked for IBM in Poughkeepsie until 1956. He then reenlisted in the Air Force and was assigned to the B-58 Test Force at Eglin A.F.B., FL, until April of 1961 when he was reassigned to Carswell A.F.B., TX. He was eventually transferred back to Eglin A.F.B, then in 1963, he transferred to Bunker Hill, A.F.B., IN. From there, he was sent to Castle A.F.B. for cross-training to become an Inflight Refueler. After completion of his training, he was assigned as a crew member on the KC-135 StratoTanker. He was then assigned to Plattsburgh A.F.B., NY in April of 1965. While stationed at

Plattsburgh, Bob served 3 separate Tours of Duty in Southeast Asia. He became a member of the Young Tiger Task Force, after completing over 100 combat missions over Southeast Asia. In 1972 he was transferred to McCoy A.F.B., FL. While stationed there, he served his final TDY to Vietnam, which included his participation in Operation Linebacker under President Lyndon Johnson near the close of the War. The remainder of his time at McCoy, he was assigned to support of the U2 and the SR71 Blackbird. McCoy was closed in 1974, so Bob chose to retire from the Air Force, but not from working. He relocated to Lake County and opened Matthews Amoco Service Center at the corner of 14th & Main in Leesburg. After 4 years, the business was closed and he went to work for the Florida Department of Corrections at Lake Correctional Institute, then Lake-Sumter Community College until 1984 when he retired completely. He made Fruitland Park his home until his death. He and his wife, Bobbette, celebrated their 66th wedding anniversary on Saturday, October 14, 2017. Visitation and Memorial Service There will be a Memorial Service for Bob at 2 pm on Saturday, November 4, 2017 at Beyers Funeral Home in Lady Lake, FL with Visitation from 1 - 2 pm. . Family and friends will gather to remember him and share memories. Graveside Service Graveside Services with military honors will be held Monday, November 6, 2017 at 11 am at the Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell, FL. Memorial Donations In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Cornerstone Hospice Foundation, 2445 Lane Park Road, Tavares, FL 32778 <https://web.cs hospice.org/>.

# Tribute Wall

SJ

“ Sorry for your loss and your family has been in my prayers. "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."  
*Philippians 4:7*



---

**Skott Jensen** - November 03, 2017 at 10:22 AM