



Lt Col Neal E. Tash Ret

APR 8, 1941 - JUL 29, 2020



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Lt Col Neal E. Tash Ret, of Lewes, DE passed away on Wednesday, July 29, 2020 at his residence. He was born in Riverside, California on April 8, 1941 the son of Col Earl and Ursula Tash. Lt Col Tash is survived by his partner of 26 years Edward Harner; son Bryan Tash (wife Sarah); grandson Conner Tash; granddaughter Madison Tash; sisters Earlene Paynter (husband Ken) and Gail Ogden (late husband Randy); nephew Robbie Ogden; nieces Stephanie and Allison Paynter; niece Christina Hammond; niece Nicole Resendez and extended family Kevin, Jason and Casey Harner.

Lt Col Tash's career spanned more than 30 years of experience in intelligence collection and analysis. He retired as an officer in the U.S. Air Force (USAF) focusing on military intelligence after serving twenty years. After retirement he spent eleven years in senior management positions with the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA) directing a broad array of programs. In 2002 he retired to Rehoboth Beach, DE.

After graduating from Washington State University with a BA degree in Political Science in 1963, he joined the USAF and served 20 years where he held a variety of joint, intelligence- and aviation - related assignments as an officer. He served as a senior intelligence officer analyzing and advising on Soviet/Warsaw Pact aerospace forces doctrine, strategies, planning, and operational capabilities. This included being one of the first members of Headquarters Air Force's strategic think tank Checkmate. He served as the Chief of the Strategic Forces Section for the National Aerospace Intelligence Center and as senior analyst for the C3 and Force Analysis Branch. Lt Col Tash served a tour of duty in Vietnam and was awarded several ribbons, medals including the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with 1 Oak Leaf Cluster, Air Medal with 1 Silver and 3 Bronze Oak Leaf Clusters, National Defense Service medal, and the Combat Readiness Medal. His final assignment brought him to the Pentagon once again, serving on the Joint Staff to work directly with the Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD), Programs and Evaluation and the Defense Intelligence Agency (DIA). He created the Forces Trends (FORT)



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futures data base of aviation and support for each NATO country. Lt Col Tash was proud to be a member of a family of career Air Force officers - his father as a Colonel, he as a Lieutenant Colonel, and his son as a Colonel.

Lt Col Tash joined DIA in 1986 in a highly classified area and served as a Senior Intelligence Officer and rose to the position of Deputy Director for Information Management after holding a series of progressively more responsible positions in the areas of intelligence collection, requirements definition, analysis, and information technology. His duties included principal advisor on national security issues relating to intelligence requirements, national intelligence databases and functional management of Defense Intelligence Production. Working directly with OSD and DIA he created the Forces Trends (FORT) futures data base of aviation and support for each NATO country. He was awarded numerous Superior Performance Awards and Special Achievement Awards.

Once settled in Rehoboth he began volunteering for various committees at the Lewes Public Library including serving two terms as treasurer on the Board of the Friends of the Library. He also volunteered for the Rehoboth Beach Film Society during their annual festival.

All services will be private. Memorial contributions may be made in Neal's name to the Lewes Public Library, 111 Adams Avenue, Lewes, DE 19958.

Please sign Mr. Tash's online guestbook located on this site.



Tribute Wall

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ST

Stephanie lit a candle in honor of Lt Col Neal.

Thank you to everyone who has taken the time to send condolences / share memories of my Uncle. I miss him tremendously -- it's taken me 3 months to get up the courage to read these pages. I miss the laughter & his calming effect on the family. His laugh, over all others in our family would ring through our family gatherings. He was a devoted son and brother -- I believe a heavy weight must have fallen on him when my grandfather died but he never showed it. He never forgot to call + send flowers on birthdays / holidays -- little things like that, were huge and so very much appreciated. Whenever my mom or her 2 sisters were having trouble dealing w/ my grandmother's stubbornness, a phone call from him saying "Now Mother ..." would be the fix. He was the most wonderful Uncle & I treasure the day he taught me ballroom dancing -- same day as the day he introduced me to guacamole -- as well as my visit w/ my mom to see him & Ed in 2004. My sister & I still remember the panic & anxiety we felt on Sep 11, 2001. We were unable to reach him for hours. The thought that we could have lost him that day made me appreciate all the days he was with us since then. I love you Uncle Neal. Until we meet again in the next life -- rest in peace.



September 23 at 10:38 AM

JH

Jason Butler Harner posted:

My step-father was an original. On the one hand, so private, modest, analytical, ethically driven, eager to examine logic or function throughout history, and on the other, just as eager to laugh loudly, at one time dance swiftly, to indulge in a spectacular meal, so full of opinion, ardent admirer and defender of opera, dance and art - so hungry to dare to allow himself to have an experience. So wanting to let go, or as Zelda Fichandler once said to a friend, "Sometimes you just need to lean back and let someone wash your hair for you." These beloved qualities complemented and pulled at each other in the most fascinating of ways, forming who dear Neal Tash as I saw him was, all the more intricately when you stop and consider the nuanced expanse of his 79 years. My life has been immensely enriched by knowing Neal throughout my adult life: the talks we've shared privately, knowing looks and smirks across tables, debates about things some might coin as generational differences, all the visits in various cities (often when he and my Dad schlepped to see me work, with limited social time to offer), and of course, most especially, in how he and my Dad have loved each other through thick and thin for 26 years. Who knew a July 4th party could be so freeing? I am, of course, relieved that he is at peace. But I already miss him so much and am so grateful to have been lucky enough to witness his humility, dignity, commitment and love between 'the Dads' in these last weeks as well as in the years preceding it. I hope wherever he is that Callas is singing 'O Patria Mia' welcoming him. I will be looking for signs of him everywhere for a long time. Rest in Peace, sweet Neal. Keep a gentle eye on your sisters, Bryan, and my Dad.

August 7 at 7:51 PM



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Krys J. sent a sympathy card to the Tash Ret family.



August 6 at 6:00 AM



Paul Knoll posted:

So deeply saddened to hear of Neal's passing. We were stationed together at Ramstein AB Germany. Neal shared his infectious love of opera with me which abides to this day. There are special people in life and I am honored that Neal blessed my life with so many extraordinary memories.

August 5 at 4:39 PM



Claire Snyder-Hall posted:

He was a great man, who served his country with distinction and brought joy to those around him. So grateful that we had the pleasure of knowing him. May he rest in peace. Love, Mikki and Claire Snyder-Hall

August 4 at 6:30 AM



Augusto Labat posted:

I met Neal when he was already retired and had the opportunity to share three trips with him. I will always remember his sharp sense of humor and our after dinner discussions while enjoying a Negroni or Malbec wine – in the same evening we use to talk about the last Bayreuth Opera House Season or if “La Lolo” was older than “La Loren”.Ciao Neal – Augusto Labat Dubosc

August 2 at 6:59 PM



Anonymous sent a Divine Peace Bouquet to the Tash Ret family.



August 1 at 1:25 PM



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CB

Chris Brown posted:

I first met Neal while working in Crystal City, VA and living in Alexandria, VA back in 1993. We connected immediately through our efforts/discussions pertaining to security related issues. He was one of the most knowledgeable/concerned proponents I knew. He was also fun to chat with on less global topics. I am so glad to have known him and to have called him a true friend. You will be sorely missed! RIP, my dear friend. - Chris Brown

August 1 at 1:03 PM

UM

Ursula McIntyre August 3 at 2:44 PM

As a military family, Neal's parents were instrumental in my parent's early days in the Air Force. Our families were very close. I was named after his mother as I was born on her birthday. The last memory I have of Neal is when he came to support my mother as my father was dying. He was like an angel that swooped in, helped her make difficult decisions with such grace. I will never forget how his presence gave us such peace. Rest In Peace, true leader. Ursula

JM

John G. Miller posted:

Dear Ed. Gary and I send our warmest wishes to you. Each time we saw you and Neal together provided enduring memories of your long and loving relationship. And our several-hour lunch in Cape May was unforgettable!! never realized what a remarkable career Neal had in the military. Another reason for us all to be proud and grateful to him for his extraordinary service. John Miller

August 1 at 11:53 AM

MM

Margaret Melson posted:

Oh Ed, I am so very sorry. Neal was the very best. I'll never forget the day when he bought the Mercedes and came to the library to pick me up for a spin. Sending love and hugs.

July 31 at 10:37 AM



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BH

Beckie Healey posted:

Ed, Neal was such a good friend. He and I worked together for many years on library committees. He was so much fun, had a great sense of humor, and always – always – added so much to committee discussions. He had an interesting life and told wonderful stories of his overseas adventures. I pestered him relentlessly about going dancing together just to see if I could keep up with this competitive ballroom dancer. What fun that would have been! And what an opera buff! I enjoyed sitting with the two of you, Ed, during the last two seasons of the Met Live in HD. I learned a lot. Thanks for including me. I've missed Neal since he became ill some time ago. And now I'm so, so sad. My condolences to you, Ed, and to Neal's immediate and extended families. Beckie

July 31 at 8:04 AM

AD

Arleen Daprile August 7 at 6:49 AM

Dear Ed: So sad to hear of Neal's passing. I served on the Friends Library Board many years ago with Neal and will remember him for his humor, wisdom and kindness. He was a real class act. My sympathies....Arleen DaPrile

KM

Kemsey J Mackey August 1 at 9:59 AM

Years and years of memories with Neal and Ed. We traveled to Europe, to Argentina and spent time together in NJ, NY, VA and of course Delaware. An amazing and accomplished man with a great sense of humor, a contagious laugh!!!, bright, and most of all caring. My condolences go to my life long friend, Ed, and to all of Neal's family and friends. Thank God for memories and for having known Neal as a good friend. Kem Mackey

JL

Jim And Gaby Linnen August 1 at 6:56 AM

So sad. Neal was unique, an "officer and a gentleman". He was really a nice guy and it was always a pleasure to run into him and share thoughts. Neal and I both served at DIA, albeit at different times and places. He left his mark and will be missed. I miss so called run ins with Neal. We could talk about a variety of subjects, not just books but also music and operas. Our condolences to his family and all his friends. He now rests in peace, no more pain, just peace. Jim and Gaby LinnenLewes

CD

Chrys Dudbridge July 31 at 2:42 PM

Dear Ed, This is heartbreaking news. I loved and valued Neal for all he did for the library, for his friendship during all my years working at the library, for his advice, sense of humor and for his kindness. My fondest memories are when he had me teach him basic knitting stitches so he could teach his granddaughter. Then there were those fun martinis you and he would offer when we would meet at the local gathering spot. I am so glad I did get to see him last December. I share your grief and send my sincere sympathy to you and all of Neal's family and friends.



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Lt Col Neal by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



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