



Keith Owens Pitchford

June 10, 1940 - October 15, 2023

Keith “K.O.” Owens Pitchford, 83, of Tallahassee passed away on October 15, 2023 after a struggle with Parkinson’s disease.

Keith was born in Batesville, Arkansas on June 10, 1940 to Keith “Coach” and Altha Pitchford. Coach Pitchford served in the U.S. Army Air Force during WWII, and following the war moved to Tallahassee with Altha, Keith, and youngest son Tom. Coach earned his Master’s degree from Florida State University and then moved to Leesburg, Florida for a coaching position. But the family soon returned to Tallahassee when Coach accepted a teaching and coaching position in FSU’s athletic department.

Keith went to Kate Sullivan Elementary School and later attended Leon High School. At Leon, Keith was a two-sport varsity athlete in basketball and baseball and was selected by his fellow students as the “Most Dependable” person at Leon during his senior year.

In 1958, Keith began his studies at Florida State University. At FSU, he was a pitcher for the Seminoles baseball team, a member of Phi Delta Theta fraternity, and a member of the Air Force ROTC. He also served as the Executive Officer for the AFROTC’s Arnold Air Society.

Following graduation from FSU, Keith was commissioned by the U.S. Air

Force (USAF) as a second lieutenant and assigned to Strategic Air Command at Travis Air Force Base (AFB) in Fairfield, California. Following Travis, he took a brief assignment at Goodfellow AFB in San Angelo, Texas before being transferred to Hof Air Station in Germany. At Hof, he met and began dating Gail Ann Fox, an elementary school teacher for the air station. While they were dating, Keith received orders to deploy to Tan Son Nhut Air Base outside Saigon, Vietnam. Keith served for a year with the 13th Reconnaissance Technical Squadron at Tan Son Nhut before returning stateside in 1966 for a three-year assignment with the National Security Agency (NSA) at Fort Meade, Maryland.

Keith and Gail became engaged and married in 1967, and in 1968 Gail gave birth to their first son, Dennis.

In 1969, the family moved to Maxwell AFB in Montgomery, Alabama, where Keith was a Section Commander at Squadron Officer School and later became a Distinguished Graduate from Air Command & Staff College. Keith and Gail's second son, Scott, was born at Maxwell in 1973.

Keith returned to the Vietnam War in 1974. He served as Chief of Intelligence with the 56th Special Operations Wing at Nakhon Phanom Royal Thai Air Force Base (NKP), located in northern Thailand.

Keith rejoined his family in the States in 1975, where he took a Post-Graduate Intelligence Course at Defense Intelligence School in Washington, DC. Soon after, he returned to Germany with his family for a four-year assignment at the headquarters for U.S. European Command at Patch Barracks in Stuttgart.

Keith's final Air Force assignment was with the USAF Electronic Security Command at NSA in Maryland.

Following his retirement from the Air Force, the family moved to Keith's hometown of Tallahassee, Florida, where his parents were residing. He then started work at Florida Department of Transportation where he worked for 24 years, culminating in a position as Executive Liaison, and retiring in 2007.

Some of Keith's favorite hobbies and activities included photography, golf and travel. He was also an avid fan of Porsche automobiles, having also been a one-time owner of a '912' previously during his time in Germany. Keith also filled his time being a supportive "band parent" to Dennis and a "theatre parent" to Scott. In 2017, Keith was inducted into the Leon High School Baseball Hall of Fame for his success as a pitcher for the team.

After his recent passing, Keith is survived by his wife Gail, sons Dennis and Scott, daughter-in-law Trena, and grandsons Holden and Sawyer. A funeral service will be held at 2 pm on Monday, Oct. 23, at Tallahassee National Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, we invite you to donate to Disabled American Veterans (www.dav.org) in his honor. Todd Wahlquist is assisting the Pitchford family with their arrangements (850-385-2193, www.bevisfh.com).

Cemetery Details

Tallahassee National Cemetery

5015 Apalachee Parkway
Tallahassee, FL 32311

Previous Events

Graveside Service

OCT **23**. 2:00 PM (ET)

Tallahassee National Cemetery
5015 Apalachee Pkwy
Tallahassee, FL 32311
(850) 402-8941

Tribute Wall



“ *Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Keith Owens Pitchford.*



October 21, 2023 at 06:15 PM



“ *I moved from PA. To Fla in 1957 as my dad was getting his Masters Degree and Keith immediately befriended me and was a wonderful long distance friend for many years!!May he rest in Peace ~Prayers ~Max Cole*

Max Cole - October 21, 2023 at 05:49 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Keith Owens Pitchford.*



October 19, 2023 at 09:28 AM