



Retired Chief Master Sergeant John E. Schmidt Jr.

May 8, 2022

Retired Chief Master Sergeant John E. Schmidt, Jr, 90, of Tallahassee, Florida died at Westminster Oaks on May 8, 2022.

Born on September 11, 1931, in Baltimore, Maryland, he moved to the Panama Canal Zone (Canal Zone) in 1935 when his father went to work for the Panama Canal Company. After graduating from Balboa High School in 1950, he initially joined the US Naval Reserve and subsequently enlisted in the US Air Force in 1951.

During his thirty-years of active duty, he served in the Canal Zone twice with duty at Albrook AFB as the Ground Training NCO, and then as the Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge of Technical Training with the Inter-American Air Forces Academy, Albrook AFB, Canal Zone. He also served at Mather AFB, California; Moody AFB, Georgia; Andrews AFB, Maryland; United States Air Force Academy, Colorado; US Military Assistance Command, Saigon, Vietnam; and his final assignment at Tyndall Air Force Base, Florida as the Base Sergeant Major for the 4756th Air Base Group. He retired from active service on 1 May 1981 at Tyndall AFB.

After retirement, John was instrumental in the start-up of the Air Force Junior ROTC program for Leon County Schools with a unit being established at Amos P. Godby High School in August 1981 where he was the Assistant

Aerospace Science Instructor. John worked tirelessly to help establish subsequent JRROTC programs at three other high schools before he retired from teaching in 1996. The Godby High School JRROTC building is proudly named after Chief Master Sergeant John E. Schmidt, Jr.

John became a member of the Air Force Association in 1954 and maintained a very active role in the leadership of the local "Colonel H. M. "Bud" West Chapter of the Air Force Association (AFA). As a life member of the AFA, John served at the national, state, and local levels of leadership and as the local chapter president for many years.

In 1985, John began a tireless search for his ancestors, and after six trips to Germany, he was able to establish nearly 13,000 individual names with direct connections to his family.

Having been raised in the Panama Canal Zone, John was an avid fan of the historical and operational capabilities of the canal as well as a vocal advocate of the original American engineering, ingenuity and management skills that built and managed the Panama Canal for over 85 years. He has been a frequent speaker at local organizations and in recent times, was called upon to report on the current expansion of the Panama Canal. He was honored to be called a "Canal Zone Brat."

In 2010, John moved to Westminster Oaks in Tallahassee, Florida where he became actively involved in many of community programs and diligently led efforts to recognize his fellow veterans and helped establish and maintain the "Wall of Honor."

Among many things, John will be remembered for his dedicated service to the United States Air Force and for his patriotic motivation to inform the public of

the proper use and display of the National Colors. He was most often referred to as the “Flag Man” of Tallahassee and the person to call to get the correct answers to United States Flag Code questions. Over the years, John has been called upon to teach classes in the history and protocol of the flag to local children.

His awards and decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, Air Force Commendation Medal, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award, Air Force Good Conduct Medal, Army Good Conduct Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Air Force Longevity Service Ribbon, NCO Professional Military Education Graduate Ribbon, Small Arms Marksmanship Ribbon, Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry, and the Vietnamese Campaign Medal. John was also selected as the Outstanding Senior NCO of the Year for the United States Air Force Academy in 1970.

John also loved being a part of “community.” He was a member of many organizations including the following: AFA; Air Force Sergeants Association; Panama Canal Society Inc; Panama Canal Museum; Leon County Sheriff’s Office Citizen’s Academy Alumni Association; Florida Sheriff’s Association; United States Air Force Military Training Instructors Association; 33rd Infantry Regimental Combat Team Association; USAF Crash Rescue Boat Association; National Association for Uniformed Services; Baltimore County, MD, Historical Society; Florida Education Association; National Education Association; Armed Forces Top Enlisted Association; American Legion; National Association for Uniformed Services; National Rifle Association; Disabled American Veterans; and American Merchant Marines Veterans Association.

Survivors include his children: Daniel Mcrae (Sylvia) of Tallahassee, Florida; Kathleen (Tim) Ryan of Colorado Springs, Colorado; John Schmidt (Diane) of

Gainesville, Florida; Tracy (Dusty) Boyce, of Monticello, Florida, and Ruth (Mike) Ivester of Ellijay, Georgia. John was the proud grandfather to thirteen (13) grandchildren and great grandfather to nine (9) great-grandchildren. He is also survived by his brother, Doug Schmidt (Sharon) of Kerrville, TX and his sister Jackie Bishop of Austin, TX.

The family will receive friends Wednesday, May 18th, 2022 from 5:00 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. at Bevis Funeral Home. Memorial services will be held 12:30 p.m. Thursday, May 19th at Faith Presbyterian Church. Inurnment will follow at 2:00 p.m. with Military Honors at Tallahassee National Cemetery. All are welcome to attend.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the "Colonel H. M. "Bud" West Chapter of the Air Force Association for use in the AFROTC/CAP Cadet Awards Fund.

Susie Mozolic of Bevis Funeral Home is assisting the family with their arrangements. (www.bevisfh.com 850-385-2193)

Cemetery Details

Tallahassee National Cemetery

5015 Apalachee Parkway
Tallahassee, FL 32311

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 18. 5:00 PM - 7:00 PM (ET)

Bevis Funeral Home & Crematory
200 John Knox Rd
Tallahassee, FL 32303
(850) 385-2193

Funeral Service

MAY 19. 12:30 PM (ET)

Faith Presbyterian Church
2200 North Meridian Rd.
Tallahassee, FL 32303

Graveside Service

MAY 19. 2:00 PM (ET)

Tallahassee National Cemetery
5015 Apalachee Parkway
Tallahassee, FL 32311

Tribute Wall



“ I was a student of Amos P. Godby High school and the JR JROTC program. I only ever met Chief Master Sergeant Schmidt once in my life as a sophomore in high school. He presented me with his own award the JROTC program had made in honor of him as well as one of his own personal challenge coins and his personal high school letterman jacket. Chief Schmidt left a significant impact on my life even in this small meeting and is one of the major reasons I joined the Military myself. I was unaware of his passing until today and my Prayers go out to his Family.
Matthew Liljegren

Matthew Liljegren - May 06, 2025 at 11:41 AM

SH

“ John, Dan and family, so sorry to hear of your father's passing. Family will be in my prayers.
May God Bless all of you,
Shirley Harvey

Shirley Harvey - May 20, 2022 at 07:59 AM

RS

“ John and I go back to the same ancestor, Andreas Schmidt (Andrew Smith) from Baumholder County, Maryland. We both enjoyed sharing our family line to each other and to other family members. Please accept my condolences. Richard F. Smith



Richard F. Smith - May 19, 2022 at 07:05 AM

TC

“ Our thoughts and prayers continue to remain with Chief Schmidt's family during this difficult time. It was a personal honor to have known Chief Schmidt for the past 15 years. He was a great mentor in helping guide the Tyndall AFA Chapter during my time with that chapter from 2007-2011. The Chief served our Tallahassee community (and the State of Florida) with distinction and passion for not only our Bud West AFA chapter, but also the Godby High School Jr ROTC program and many other veterans' organizations. Chief Schmidt's legacy will endure.

Tom Carney - May 19, 2022 at 05:40 AM

JH

“ I met the CHIEF back in the 1980s through his son Deputy John Schmidt of the Leon County Sheriffs Office. The Chief was a well liked and respected instructor at Godby High School for many years. The Chief never met a stranger and was known to mix a mean "Moscow Mule" !!!

JOHN HARRIS - May 17, 2022 at 10:33 PM

SB

“ My sincere condolences to the family on CMSgt Schmidt's loss. I enjoyed working with Chief while he was President of the AFA Bud West Chapter. In his honor, I made a donation to the Air and Space Forces Association to benefit Aerospace Education Programs. We will miss the Chief; he was a patriot and a gentleman. God bless you. Sharon Branch

Sharon Branch - May 16, 2022 at 04:00 PM

JW

“ My condolences to Danny, Johnny, Kathleen, Tracy, Ruthie, and their families. I am deeply saddened by the loss of your father. He truly loved and treasured his family.

Janis Williamson - May 15, 2022 at 04:05 PM

JB

“ Joyce And John Bartosik lit a candle in memory of Retired Chief Master Sergeant John E. Schmidt Jr.



Joyce and John Bartosik - May 12, 2022 at 06:56 PM



Y'all are so so sweet! Daddy sure did enjoy our breakfast/lunch at Village Inn with y'all and his conversation about Vietnam with you John! Thank you so much for lighting a candle as well as your sweet card!!

Tracy N Dusty Boyce - May 14, 2022 at 09:29 AM

DR

“ I was fortunate in being able to serve as john"s sucessor as Vice-President of our AFA chapter,I did not know what I was doing and John guided me and basically held my hand until I could learn my duties,He was very much a student of attention to detail. There was only one way to complete your job and that was always the honorable and the right way.I found him to have a love for his physical family and anything Air Force related.He was also a very devoted to researching his family history.We all are going to miss his leadership and his positive influence he showed for countless young men and women he positively influenced.May he rest in Peace Msgt Donald R. Gordey USAF(Reserve) retired.

Donald R.Gordey - May 12, 2022 at 12:01 PM



“ *Lily and Rose Tribute Spray was purchased for the family of Retired Chief Master Sergeant John E. Schmidt Jr..*



May 11, 2022 at 02:48 PM



“ *I met Chief Schmidt as an AFJROTC cadet at Godby in 1983. He was a great man, great patriot, and I learned a lot about leadership from him. Just saw him a few months ago and he always had a smile on his face. He will be missed*

Don May - May 11, 2022 at 11:50 AM



That was my Freshman year as well. Lots of great memories from those three years of ROTC with Chief Schmidt.

Craig Wood - September 19, 2022 at 05:16 PM



“ *Beautiful Dreams was purchased for the family of Retired Chief Master Sergeant John E. Schmidt Jr..*



May 11, 2022 at 11:44 AM

RC

“Chief Schmidt was a leader without question and contributed to the success of countless individuals. His smile and unique laugh will be missed by those that had the pleasure of knowing him. He was so proud of his students and his family. Chief Schmidt thank you for making such a positive and formative impact on so many lives, mine included. You will be greatly missed but your work is done on earth. We pause to honor your memory and celebrate a life well lived. Duty, honor, country are three values that define you.

“High Flight “

*Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling mirth
Of sun-split clouds – and done a hundred things
You have not dreamed of – wheeled and soared and swung
High in the sunlit silence. Hov'ring there
I've chased the shouting wind along, and flung
My eager craft through footless halls of air.
Up, up the long delirious, burning blue,
I've topped the windswept heights with easy grace
Where never lark, or even eagle flew –
And, while with silent lifting mind I've trod
The high un-trespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand and touched the face of God.*



Ron Cave - May 10, 2022 at 07:13 PM

MO

“ *Merry and Jorge Ortega purchased the Beautiful i
n Blue for the family of Retired Chief Master
Sergeant John E. Schmidt Jr..*



Merry and Jorge Ortega - May 10, 2022 at 07:17 AM

MB

“ *John and family:*

*My condolences for the loss of your father. I had some great
conversations with him through the years and enjoyed sharing
updates on my Air Force son with him. He was a great
representative of the USAF and I am certain will be missed.*

*Mike Boles
Bowie Maryland*

Mike Boles - May 09, 2022 at 08:49 PM