



MGySgt Robert (Bob) Van Gorder

March 30, 2023

MGySgt Robert (Bob) Sherman Van Gorder, 80, of Fort Collins, CO passed away peacefully with his family joined by his side on March 30, 2023, 17:35 pm at Medical Center of the Rockies in Loveland, CO.

Bob was the eldest of six children, born on January 7, 1943, at 15:45 pm in Fresno, CA to Franklin Jerome and Margaret Ida (Hinz) Van Gorder.

Bob attended elementary school in Mansfield, PA and attended Goldrick Middle School and Bob Kepner Junior High School in Denver, along with attending Denver West High school completing his freshman and sophomore years in Denver, CO. His family later moved to Yuma, CO where he attended his Junior and senior years and graduated from Yuma High School on May 3, 1961.

There are many family stories on why the family moved from Denver to Yuma, CO during his high school years and according to family, his parents wanted their children to all have a good education and be able to graduate high school. Receiving a good education was a high priority his parents wanted to instill in their children.

While in high school Bob senior quote was, "I like work; I could sit and watch it for hours." He would soon find out that this would be the exact opposite as he

enlisted in the Marine Corps on August 28, 1961. Bob served his Country with unwavering Honor and Pride. He was stationed on many Military Bases and countries including Okinawa and Vietnam. During his enlistment he was awarded 6 good merit awards, Meritorious Mast Rifle Marksmen badge, and Facility Marine of the Month May 20, 1966. His final orders stationed the family at the Marine Corps air station in Yuma, AZ where he retired after serving 20 years. He was Honorably Discharged as a Master Sergeant on December 31, 1981.

As his children, growing up, he would always remind us that just because he is a Veteran of the Marine Corp and is no longer Active Military, he still has taken the Oath of Enlistment and that never expires. Once a Marine always a Marine "Ooh-Rah" and to always honor and respect those who have served and still serve our Country. "SEMPER FI".

Upon his retirement, Bob and his family made the long journey back, during a snowstorm, to Fort Morgan, CO. Memories from his sons recalled, Dad was pushing hard to be in Colorado before the New Year and to be home. Later in life he moved to Fort. Collins, Co to be closer to his brothers and Sisters.

While on Military leave to Fort Morgan, visiting his family, he was introduced through a mutual friend, Marge (Allen) Gettman, to Sharon Arlene Millsap. And on December 19, 1964, he married the love of his life. Sharon stood steadfast by his side during his Military career. While stationed in Norman, OK she gave birth to their first son Michael, on February 26, 1971. Their 2nd son came 4 years later while being stationed in Des Moines, IA, Sharon gave birth to Kurt on March 18, 1975.

While stationed in Santa Ana, CA, Bob was able to buy their 1st vehicle, a 1956 Mercury Montclair. He was so proud that he was able to save his Military pay and make this purchase. This was his favorite car and his pride and joy.

Sharon recalls they used to drive it to Newport and Laguna Beach to enjoy the ocean and to eat at their favorite ice cream parlor on Sundays.

Bob's all-time favorite band is Pink Floyd and on January 18, 1994, he was able to finally see them in concert at Mile High Stadium. He would later remanence that this was one of the best concerts of his life. He was a huge Broncos fan and enjoyed watching football games and the super bowl with family and enjoyed watching his old-time favorites M*A*S*H, Star-Trek and X-Files.

Bob enjoyed traveling in his younger years, he always kept his passport ready and with him at all times. Bob's dream was to visit Australia in his later years and wanted to stay a month to but unfortunately was never able to make the trip.

For those who knew him, he would often get on the subject of Politics for hours if you would let him. When you would visit Dad, and you mention current world politics or the news you better be ready for a lesson and his point of view on the subject.

As his sons we were raised by a devoted, courageous and loving Dad. He guided us and showed us the true meaning of the Marine Corp & family that has made me and my brother the men we are today. Dad was always there whether it was a shoulder to cry on, someone to just listen to you or give guidance.

Dad was our Patriarch, Mentor and Hero.

Bob enjoyed spending Holidays with Family, attending Birthdays, dance recitals, weddings, plays and graduations, and listening to his niece's podcasts. He loved his Grandchildren and Great Grandchildren with all of his

heart. He especially enjoyed spending time with Theodore, his Great Grandson, making up songs with him and recording them. He was always happy and encouraged you on your accomplishments and achievements in life.

Bob was a loving Father, Husband, Brother, Grand Father and even earned the nickname Grandpa the Great by his grandson Theodore. Bob would often sign off on emails as Grumpy Grandpa with his Granddaughter Ashlei.

His love for life and family can be seen by all who surround him. His dedication to his family and lineage was his life's passion. He was a self-trained master of genealogy and family ancestry. Bob diligently and respectfully traced his family ancestry back to 1625. 11 generations with 8 generations of grandparents and he was successful in tracing his ancestry back to the Mayflower and Civil War. His biggest accomplishment was his trip driving back to Galeton, PA where he collected and researched his ancestry. He brought back many documents and information that he was able to process correctly and accurately.

Bob is survived by his 2 brothers John (Carole) and Jim (Rosemary) and 3 sisters Val (Chris), Carol and Sharon K. His life partner Sharon A., 2 sons Mike (Micherra) and Kurt (Melissa). Numerous Nieces and Nephews. Bob has 7 grandchildren Jesse, Kayla, Ashlei, Hannah, Bryonna, Ollie, Caleb. 3 Great Grandchildren Theodore, Sawyer, Sutton.

He is preceded in death by both his parents Franklin and Margaret Van Gorder.

A service will be held at a later date by the family. In Lieu of flowers-Please donate to your local VA or Brain Trauma Center

Tribute Wall

AW

“ I was stationed onboard the USS TRIPOLI in 1976 with MGySgt VanGorder. He was a Gunnery Sergeant then. He was a good Marine. May he rest in peace. My condolences to his family and friends. Semper Fi



Al Whitney - August 18, 2024 at 04:26 PM



“ Thank you for your service to Country!
Prayers and condolences to family and friends. God bless.
-Tony & Janet Seahorn

Tony Seahorn - April 17, 2023 at 07:51 PM

SY

“ *The Buckley SFB military Retiree Activities Office (RAO) would like to offer our sincere condolences and our gratitude for MGySgt Van Gorder’s distinguished service to our country in the Marine Corps. If you would like help with any matters related to casualty assistance, Defense Finance & Accounting Service, Survivor Benefit Plan (SBP), Veterans Affairs (VA), etc. you can contact our office on Buckley SFB at 720-847-6693 or raobuckley@gmail.com. The RAO is staffed by volunteers, all military retirees themselves, and our sole purpose is to provide assistance to any military retirees and surviving spouses/family members with anything related to their military service and/or benefits, in particular during difficult times such as this. We are deeply sorry for your loss.*

*Steve Young
Lt Col, USAF, Ret
Director, Buckley SFB RAO*

Steve Young - April 12, 2023 at 09:26 AM

DB

“ *Bob was a great man who took me to my first concert. I know he will be missed by so many. Thanks for the memories Bob! Rest in peace my friend.*

David V Bond - April 11, 2023 at 02:08 PM