

Darrell Francis Kirkpatrick

December 11, 2012

By Contributor



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Cmdr. Darrell Francis Kirkpatrick, USN retired, born March 4, 1929, to John Robert Kirkpatrick and Elizabeth Belt Kirkpatrick in Stennett, Texas. Following a long battle with vascular Parkinson's disease, he passed away peacefully Nov. 29, 2012, at the age of 83, at the Pine Lake Adult Family Home in Sammamish. His wife Lillian and loving family were at his side.

Darrell gave 24 dedicated years as an officer and a gentleman to his country and the Navy. He entered the Navy Midshipman Program in June 1946 at the age of 17 and was enrolled at Mesa Junior College in Grand Junction, Colo., for two years prior to being transferred to Pensacola, Fla., for flight training. He was commissioned ensign on July 28, 1950, and assigned to Attack Squadron VA35 aboard the aircraft carrier USS Leyte during the Korean conflict.

In 1961, Cmdr. Kirkpatrick continued his education while on active duty at the U.S. Navy Post Graduate School in Monterey, Calif., receiving a Bachelor of Science in naval science in 1963. In 1966, he graduated from the U.S. Naval War College in Newport, R.I., with distinction and simultaneously received his Master of Science in international affairs from George Washington University.

He was then assigned to duty as executive officer, Fleet Air Reconnaissance Squadron One in Atsugi, Japan, for a two-year tour. That tour ended early when he was recalled to the States to commission and take command of Reconnaissance Attack Squadron Fourteen in February 1968. Cmdr. Kirkpatrick was relieved of that command in July 1968, when he assumed command of Reconnaissance Attack Squadron Eleven, known as the "Checkertails," aboard the USS Kitty Hawk.

Cmdr. Kirkpatrick's last duty assignment, prior to retirement in 1970, was as the executive officer of the aircraft carrier USS Forrestal. Following his naval career, he served for 16 years as an administrator for the Seminole County School Board in Florida before retiring permanently in 1990.

Darrell was preceded in death by his parents and his wife of 49 years, Patricia Rosemary (McCormick) Kirkpatrick. He later met and married Lillian May (Bailey) Butters in 2002.

Survivors include sons William Eugene Kirkpatrick and Francis Lee Kirkpatrick of Florida, and Lawrence

SURVIVORS INCLUDE SONS WILLIAM EUGENE KIRKPATRICK and FRANCIS LEE KIRKPATRICK, of Florida, and LAWRENCE Kevin Kirkpatrick, wife Carolyn and family of Burlington, Ontario, Canada; stepsons David Allen Butters, wife Judy and family of Seattle, and Terrence McKean Butters and daughters of Bothell; and numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren, nieces and nephews.

Sibling survivors include brothers John Robert Kirkpatrick and wife Marge, Roy Douglas Kirkpatrick, of Kremlin, Okla., and Howard Delane Kirkpatrick and wife Jackie, of Redding, Calif.; and sister Betty Jo Tennant, of Enid, Okla.

Memorial services and a celebration of life with full military honors will be held after the first of the New Year under the direction of Flintoft's Funeral Home in Issaquah, with private interment.

Remembrances in Darrell's honor and memory may be made to one of the following: Providence Hospice of Seattle, 425 Pontius Ave. N., Suite 300, Seattle, WA 98109-5452; or Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society, 875 N. Randolph St., Suite 225, Arlington, VA 22203.