



Gayle Eugene Madison, Ret. Col.

August 23, 1918 - January 12, 2015

Gayle Madison was born August 23, 1918 in Wallowa, OR and died peacefully on January 12, 2015 in Albuquerque, NM at the age of 96. Gayle graduated from high school in Walla Walla, WA, where he swam and was a member of the Drama Club and Army ROTC. After high school, Gayle enlisted in the Army and was stationed at Hickam Field, Oahu, HI. Returning to the mainland, Gayle received the highest score on the West Point qualifying exam and was nominated by Washington State Senator Bone to the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. He graduated with the June class of 1943. After graduation, Gayle joined the Army Air Corps and trained as a pilot in Visalia, CA. He was then assigned to the 456th Bombardment Group, 745 Squadron, within the 3rd Air Division of the Fifteenth Air Force, stationed in Stornara, Italy. Gayle started as the squadron operations officer and moved to pilot a B-24 Liberator in combat over Italy and Eastern Europe after his promotion to Captain. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for his extraordinary achievement while piloting the leading aircraft in large combat formation. At the end of World War II, Gayle – now Major Madison – served in the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. and met and fell in love with Gretchen Hasselbring. After being reassigned to Fort Shafter in Honolulu, Gayle invited Gretchen to Hawaii, where they were married and had their first child, Robert. Gretchen taught Gayle to play golf and he soon became an expert. Returning to Washington, D.C., the couple had two more boys, Rodger and Douglas. In 1953, Gayle was assigned as a liaison with the British Royal Air Force and

took his family to live near London. Gayle and his family returned to the U.S. in 1957 to Ft. Hunter near Savannah, GA, where he flew the six-jet-engine B-47. In 1959, Gayle was promoted to Lt. Colonel and moved to Offutt Air Force Base near Omaha, NE, where he remained until the end of his Air Force career. In addition to the DFC, Gayle also received the Air Medal with three Clusters, the Presidential Unit Citation with Cluster, and numerous service and campaign ribbons. He retired as a U.S. Air Force Colonel to Tucson, AZ, where, as a member of the Oro Valley Golf Club, he and Gretchen won the Husband/Wife Championship 12 times. Gretchen died in 1983, and Gayle remained in Tucson until 2008, when he made his final move, to Albuquerque – where he enjoyed the close company of sons Robert and Douglas. Colonel Gayle Madison is survived by his sons, Robert and Douglas of Albuquerque, Rodger of Los Angeles and grandchildren, Erin (daughter of Douglas) and Megan, Kerry and Russell (children of Rodger). He is especially mourned and loved by Paula Madison, wife of Robert; Wilhelmena, wife of Douglas; and Jan, wife of Rodger. A Visitation will be held Friday, January 23, 2015 from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at FRENCH – University. A Graveside Service will follow at 3:00 p.m. at Santa Fe National Cemetery.

FRENCH - University

1111 University Blvd. NE

505-843-6333

Previous Events

Visitation

JAN **23**. 11:00 AM - 1:00 PM (MT)

FRENCH Funerals - Cremations (University)

1111 University Blvd NE

Albuquerque, NM 87102

(505) 843-6333

<https://www.FrenchFunerals.com>

Graveside Services

JAN **23**. 3:00 PM (MT)

Santa Fe National Cemetery

501 N. Guadalupe St.

NM 87504

Tribute Wall



“ *French Funerals created a Tribute Video in memory of Gayle Eugene Madison, Ret. Col.*



FRENCH Funerals & Cremations - January 23, 2015 at 10:23 AM



“ *On behalf of the French Family of Companies, we express our deepest condolences.*

Trinity Montoya - January 20, 2015 at 02:21 PM