



Gary William Eads

March 6, 1944 - May 4, 2026

Born in South St. Louis in 1944, he was known for his strength and resilience from an early age, earning the nickname “Butch.”

He is survived by his three daughters, Caroline Toye, Christine Eads, and Shannon Suydam; his son-in-law, John Suydam; his former son-in-law, John Toye, with whom he remained close; his grandsons, Brandon Toye, Ryan Toye, Michael Toye, Aidan Eads-Shields, Jackson Suydam, and Justin Suydam; and his two brothers, Ron Eads and Phillip Eads.

He attended Southwest Missouri State University before joining the United States Air Force, where he began his aviation career as an air traffic controller. His service as a veteran remained an important part of his identity throughout his life. He went on to serve in several leadership roles within the Professional Air Traffic Controllers Organization (PATCO), ultimately becoming President during the historic 1981 strike—a pivotal moment in the profession.

He met the love of his life, Sharon, at just 16, and they married in 1964, sharing 58 years together until her passing in 2022. Together, they built a life centered on family and partnership, including running their successful business, DEP Printing and Graphics in Woodbridge, Virginia, for over 25 years.

He was committed to his community, serving on the fire services board, volunteering with the Democratic Committee and supporting local elections, and remaining an active Rotarian for many years. Even in retirement, he continued to give back.

An avid athlete throughout his life, he enjoyed football, baseball, basketball, softball, and golf. He also loved coaching his children, grandchildren, and many others in the community. He cherished being a grandfather—attending their events, spending time together, and treating them to his famous root beer floats. He shared a unique and close relationship with each of his grandsons, taking pride in who they were and who they were becoming.

He was fortunate to have lifelong friendships, many of which spanned 40 to 50 years. He was a loyal and devoted friend, always there when it mattered most.

Above all, he was a family man who believed in serving others.

A viewing will be held at Jefferson Funeral Chapel from 2:00–4:00 PM on Saturday, May 16, at 5755 Castlewellan Dr., Alexandria, VA 22315. A celebration-of-life reception will follow immediately at the home of Shannon and John Suydam. A military burial for Gary and Sharon will take place for the immediate family in early July.

For those wishing to honor Gary's memory, memorial contributions may be made to <https://www.rotary.org/en/about-rotary/rotary-foundation>.

Cemetery Details

Quantico National Cemetery

18424 Joplin Rd
Triangle, VA 22172

Previous Events

Viewing

MAY 16. 2:00 PM - 4:00 PM (ET)

Jefferson Funeral Chapel
5755 Castlewellan Drive
Alexandria, VA 22315
(703) 971-7400
info@jeffersonfuneralchapel.com
<https://www.jeffersonfuneralchapel.com>

Tribute Wall

DC

“ I worked with Gary from 1969 to 1981 when the strike went down. We played softball together several seasons. I remember one night when we came in on a midnight shift and Gary was talking about the Charles Karault “on the Road” show on the 6 o’clock CBS evening news.

Seems Charles was standing in front of a big tree with cucumbers tied all over it and talking about a Pickle Orchard. Gary turned the tv off to take a nap and missed Katault saying “April Fool.” He wa tagged Pickles



Darrell Chapman - May 22 at 09:05 PM

BR

“ Bobby Robinson planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gary William Eads.

Bobby Robinson - May 16 at 09:53 AM

BR

“ Bobby Robinson purchased the Peaceful White Lilies Basket for the family of Gary William Eads.



Bobby Robinson - May 16 at 09:53 AM



“ Arrive in Style was purchased for the family of Gary William Eads.



May 15 at 11:43 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Gary William Eads.

May 15 at 11:43 PM



“ Sonia and Jasmine Loposky planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gary William Eads.

Sonia and Jasmine Loposky - May 15 at 09:03 PM



“ Sonia and Jasmine Loposky purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of Gary William Eads.



Sonia and Jasmine Loposky - May 15 at 09:03 PM



“ From Allie, Pat and Lisa Miller planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gary William Eads.

From Allie, Pat and Lisa Miller - May 15 at 10:40 AM

FM

“ From Allie, Pat and Lisa Miller purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Gary William Eads.



From Allie, Pat and Lisa Miller - May 15 at 10:40 AM



“ Be My Love Bouquet with Red Roses was purchased for the family of Gary William Eads.



May 15 at 07:17 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Gary William Eads.

May 15 at 07:17 AM

AR

“ Adriana Rodriguez purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Gary William Eads.



Adriana Rodriguez - May 14 at 08:14 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Gary William Eads.*



May 14 at 04:55 PM



“ *Eads Family, Kathy and I send our deepest condolences to you all! We wish we could attend the celebration but will be out of town. Both Kathy and I had a great appreciation and love for Gary and Sharon! There are so many memories and thoughts that cross our mind, but the 2 most fun were when we Rotarians played Donkey Basketball for another group's fundraisers. Also, when a certain someone was Santa Claus in Occoquan and Gary pointed out Aiden and told me who it was. Poor Aiden was really taken aback when Santa called him by name.*



Mark Worrilo - May 10 at 05:49 PM



“ *The Quidley Family purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Gary William Eads.*



The Quidley Family - May 08 at 11:05 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Gary William Eads.

May 07 at 04:05 PM



“ Magnificent Life Spray was purchased for the family of Gary William Eads.



May 07 at 04:05 PM



“ My prayers and blessings go out to you and your family. I am so so blessed you brought such a great amazing daughter into this world. I love and adore her and her son. I promise I will keep an eye on them both. Please rest well in heaven and know Im am sending prayers

https://youtu.be/m7arjBM__eY

Thomas Cook - May 07 at 03:38 PM



“ Chris Silk purchased the Beautiful in Blue for the family of Gary William Eads.



Chris Silk - May 07 at 09:33 AM

CS

“ I met Gary around 1989-1990 when doing business near DEP. Shortly thereafter I was recruited into the nascent Northern Virginia Gashouse Gang fantasy baseball league. We had 25 years together before the league disbanded. But Gary and I stay connected. We had many commissioners for the league over the years but Gary was the spiritual center of our group. Every spring Gary and Sharon would host our draft at their house...a rite of spring for many of us. I miss those days truly. And I miss Gary as I'm sure everyone here does. Gary was a kind and caring soul who always had a smile and something positive to say. My thoughts and prayers are with all the Eads friends and family.

Chris Silk - May 07 at 09:30 AM

AS

“ Aunt Kathy and Sarah, Sean and Soleil purchased the Full Of Love Bouquet for the family of Gary William Eads.



Aunt Kathy and Sarah, Sean and Soleil - May 06 at 09:10 PM

RP

“ Rest in Peace Brother.....Ron & Carol Ann Taylor



Ron Taylor, President PATCO - May 06 at 02:53 PM

AT

“ Adam, Debra & the Teladoc Health Team purchased the Magnificent Life Spray for the family of Gary William Eads.



Adam, Debra & the Teladoc Health Team - May 06 at 01:20 PM

AT

“ Adam, Debra & the Teladoc Health Team planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Gary William Eads.

Adam, Debra & the Teladoc Health Team - May 06 at 01:20 PM