

MASS OF CHRISTIAN BURIAL

11:00 a.m. Friday, July 31, 2026

Our Lady Of Guadalupe Parish

St. Mary's Catholic Church

Hawarden, Iowa

CELEBRANT

Father Mauro Sanchez

ORGANIST

Sandy Buffington

CANTOR

Teresa Huenink

URN BEARERS

Connor McSwain ~ Philip Allen Toft

Russell Fjellanger ~ Steve Toft

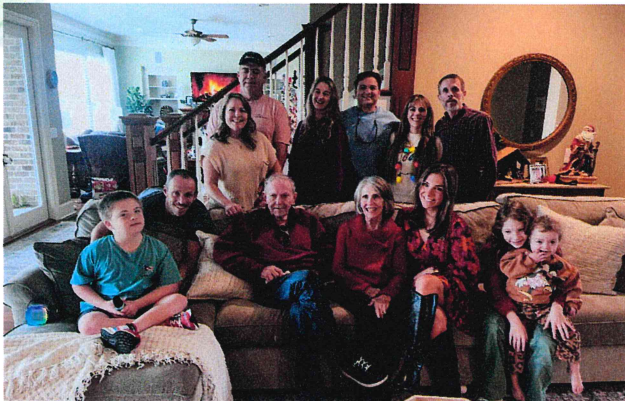
INURNMENT AND MILITARY RITES

Bergstrom Bodeen American Legion Post 128 of Hudson

US Air Force Honor Guard

Eden Cemetery, Hudson, South Dakota

*Please join Lonnie's family for lunch and fellowship
in the church hall following the Mass*



In Loving Memory *Major Lauren "Lonnie" Toft*



HIGH FLIGHT

By John Gillespie Magee, Jr.

Oh, I have slipped the surly bonds of earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered
wings;
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tum-
bling 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 untrespassed sanctity of space,
Put out my hand, and touched the face of
God.



Major Lauren "Lonnie" Lee Toft passed away Thursday, July 16th, 2026, in Summerville, South Carolina, with his wife and children by his side, and his family and friends with him in spirit.

Lauren, better known as Lonnie, was born on February 10, 1946, in the Hudson Hospital, Hudson, South Dakota, to Howard and Lila (Treiber) Toft. He was the youngest of five siblings and with his birth, the Toft family was complete.

Lonnie's school years started in a one-room country school in Sioux County, Iowa, where he would walk to school with his brother, Philip and sister, Mavis crossing corn fields to get there. Later, the family moved to Hudson, and Lonnie started school at Hudson Public Schools. It was in 6th grade where Lonnie met his future wife, Paula Scott. Lonnie graduated from Hudson High where he participated in football, basketball, and baseball and enjoyed singing in Glee Club. After his high school graduation, Lonnie enlisted in the United States Navy, and proudly served his country for four years as a radarman on two different ships during the Vietnam War. When his four-year commitment was complete, Lonnie returned home and married the love of his life, Paula Kay Scott on August 8th, 1969, at St. Joseph's Cathedral in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

After their wedding, Lonnie enrolled in Dakota State College in Madison, South Dakota. While attending college, Lonnie and Paula welcomed their first daughter, Shannon. Upon college graduation, Lonnie was recruited as an officer in the United States Air Force. He attended Officer Candidate Training in San Antonio, Texas, and from there he moved his family to Del Rio, Texas, where he trained as a pilot, graduating in July 1974. While in Del Rio, the family grew and they welcomed their second daughter, Tiffany. Lonnie started his pilot career flying T-37's and T-38's. His Air Force career took the family to California, Oklahoma, Texas, Mississippi, Michigan, South Carolina, and England. While stationed in Mississippi, he became an instructor pilot, serving as class commander, but his greatest joy in Mississippi was the birth of their son, Seth. From Mississippi to Michigan, the Toft's added their last, but cherished, child to the family, their daughter Courtney. Lonnie began flying C-141's which allowed him to fly cargo all over the world, his favorite place being England. While the family was stationed in England, they went all over Europe. It wasn't always work for Lonnie as he joined a British dart team and he especially enjoyed his favorite past time, golf.

What a great place to play golf, because many times, he was able to travel to Scotland with his friends to play on the beautiful courses there. Lonnie also had a lifelong love of fishing. He fished in Canada multiple times with friends, and a special fishing trip to Venezuela with his son-in-law and friends.

After 4 years in the Navy, and 16 years in the Air Force, Lonnie retired in October 1990, with his family in South Carolina. He continued to love golfing, so much so that he began working at the Crowfield and Legend Oaks golf courses where he played multiple times a week. A highlight for Lonnie was when he took his daughters to the Master's Golf Tournament

His interests also led him to purchase a pet containment company where he got to enjoy training dogs. When his wife, Paula, retired, they traveled with their camper through many states, meeting friends and family and enjoying their time together. While he kept busy with golf, fishing, and traveling, his favorite role was being a grandpa to his five grandchildren. He was lovingly known as Bomp. He never missed their school activities, cheering them on in football, baseball, swim meets, lacrosse, races, and dance recitals.

Lonnie had so much to be proud of in his life, starting with the life he created in the military, his wife and children who gave him his drive to lead a good life, and his devotion and love for his wife that gave his children a role model to follow in their own lives. Raised in a Christian home he was a faith-filled man, attending mass with his family and joining the Catholic Church later in life. He was so proud of his children, and he was especially proud of his son, Seth's, service in the Marines. While his life was amazing to say the least, he was a man of simple pleasures, golfing, fishing, family and love of country. He was a man of integrity and honor. No greater words can be spoken of a man than these.

Grateful for sharing his life are his wife of 56 years, Paula, Summerville, South Carolina; three children, Shannon (Roy) McSwain, Meggett, South Carolina, Seth Toft, James Island, South Carolina, and Courtney (Conran) Toft, James Island, South Carolina; five grandchildren, Connor, Madison, Eli, Hayden, and Layla; brother, Jim Toft of Canton, South Dakota; sister, Mavis Fjellanger of Sioux Falls, South Dakota; sister-in-law, Jean Toft of Hawarden, Iowa; and Hilma Ryken of Canton, South Dakota. He is also survived by several cherished nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his beloved daughter, Tiffany, to whom Lonnie was a devoted father that cherished his daughter's memory until his very last breath; his parents, Howard and Lila Toft; brothers, Gerald Toft and Phillip Toft; sisters-in-law, Louella Toft and Andrea Toft; brother-in-law, Arden (Flip) Fjellanger; and Gilbert Ryken and Lawrence Ryken; and niece, Susan Toft.