

Howard Steen was born on November 18, 1933, to John and Laura (Huglen) Steen, Howard dedicated his life to service, both in the military and in the community. Howard was a career Air Force man from Fergus Falls, Minn., who graduated from Fergus Falls High School in 1951, and from the University of Minnesota in 1957. He joined the Air Force in 1958 and his military career took him to various parts of the world. Howard was stationed in Germany from 1966 to 1970, and he completed two tours in Vietnam where he earned numerous commendations for his bravery and leadership. He first served in Vietnam in 1965 and 1966, as a C-123 Aircraft commander with special operations 19th Air Commando Squadron, flying 707 combat missions. His second tour was in 1972 as a B-52 Aircraft commander, flying 109 combat missions to include Line Backer missions over North Vietnam. When Howard retired from the Air Force in 1978, he had earned numerous medals and ribbons including 20 Air Medals, 2 Air Force Commendation Medals, and a Combat Crew Readiness Medal. On Memorial Day 2014, he was awarded "by direction of the president of the United States," the Distinguished Flying Cross "for extraordinary achievement in aerial flight" in July 1972. Howard was honorably discharged in 1978, achieving the rank of Major.

In retirement, Howard transitioned from big bombers to Big Macs. Following his distinguished military service, Howard served the communities in which he lived, as a franchise owner-operator of McDonald's Restaurants for more than 20 years. Howard opened and operated restaurants in LeMars, IA (1980-1982), Wahpeton, ND (1982-2001), and Morris, MN (1993-2001). Civilian life was not easy because of Vietnam, where he was exposed to Agent Orange, which forced the removal of his larynx in 1993 due to cancer. Howard became a life member of the Disabled American Veterans (DAV) post in Fargo, ND, and a member of Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW) post #4582 in Starbuck, MN.

Howard is survived by his wife of over 70 years, Juanita (Lenzmeier); his children, Michael (JoAnn), Mesa, AZ, Kimberly (Jeffrey) Beauchamp, Wahpeton, ND, and Kevin (Cathy), Fairfax Station, VA; his grandchildren, Matthew (Randee) Steen, Dianna (Seth) Knudson, Jessica (Matthew) Bogenreif, Steffanie Beauchamp, Laura (Nathan) Leben, Kerri Beauchamp, Ethan (Wynne) Steen, Jared (Erin) Steen; 9 great-grandchildren, Ryan, Kyle, and Dylan Bogenreif, Rachel and Kaylin Steen, Carter, Angela, and Caden Knudsen, and Violet Leben, plus many nieces and nephews. Howard was preceded in death by his granddaughter, Angela Steen; his parents; and his siblings.

He enjoyed spending time with his family, driving his boat at the lake, hunting deer and waterfowl, ice fishing, chopping wood, and tending fires in the fireplace. He was an avid fan of the Minnesota Vikings, Minnesota Twins, and Minnesota Timberwolves. As snowbirds, Howard and his wife Juanita lived in Starbuck, MN at their lake home (1994 to 2023), and at their winter home in Hot Springs, AR (1999 to 2023). Prior to that, they resided in Wahpeton, ND. In 2024, Howard and Juanita moved back to Wahpeton, ND where their daughter continued to provide tender loving care for them.

Howard left a lasting impact upon those he served and worked alongside. His life-long journey was reflective of love, compassion, and an unwavering faith in God. Howard was baptized and raised Lutheran. He attended Catholic Mass with his wife and family. For the past year, Howard found peace and joy when his daughter read scripture and prayed the Rosary. Howard carried his "Cross" daily (e.g., wore his Rosary close to his heart). He put his trust in Jesus as he focused intently on the Crucifix placed near his bed. In the past weeks, Howard listened to Catholic hymns being played on his television and he received many beautiful prayers and Blessings from Fathers Haman and Foertsch (of St. John's Church) during their daily visits to our house. Clearly, Howard was filled with the Holy Spirit as God called him home on July 25, 2025. His legacy of service, love, and dedication will forever be remembered by his family and friends.

Eternal rest grant unto Howard, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May his soul and the souls of all the faithful departed, through the mercy of God, rest in peace.

Amen.

In Loving

M E M O R Y



Howard John Steen
1933 - 2025



High Flight

Oh! I have slipped the surly bonds of Earth
And danced the skies on laughter-silvered wings.
Sunward I've climbed, and joined the tumbling 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 wind-swept heights with easy grace
Where never lark, or ever 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.

John Gillespie Magee, Jr.

Howard John Steen



Born

November 18, 1933 | Fergus Falls, Minnesota

Passed Away

July 25, 2025 | Wahpeton, North Dakota

Age

91 Years | 8 Months | 7 Days

Funeral Service

10:30 am - Thursday, July 31, 2025
St. John's Catholic Church - Wahpeton, North Dakota

Officiant

Fr. Robert Foertsch

Readers

Jessica Bogenreif | Steffanie Beauchamp

Music

Organist | Mary Jane Pauly
Cantor | Carmen Paquin

Congregational Hymns

"I Heard The Voice Of Jesus" | "The Servant Song"
"The King Of Love My Shepherd Is" | The Song Of Farewell"
"On Eagles Wings"

Pallbearers

Matthew Bogenreif | Ryan Bogenreif | Kyle Bogenreif
Dylan Bogenreif | Nathan Leben | Tim Lenzmeier

Interment at a later date

Fairview Cemetery | Wahpeton, North Dakota