



## Orval "Buck" Dietzel

May 3, 1940 - January 19, 2020

Orval "Buck" Dietzel, 79, of Bellingham, WA, surrounded by his wife, sons, and the sweet serenades of Willie Nelson, bestowed his final gifts of love and peace on January 19, 2020.

Buck was born on May 3, 1940, to William and Viola Dietzel in Morton, WA, which was a small logging community at the time. The family was of modest means, and opportunity knocked when his dad was offered a job at Kaiser Aluminum in Spokane, WA and the family relocated to Greenacres. In Greenacres Buck excelled at both sports and scholastics, and graduated from Central Valley High School in 1958. Though he received a scholarship to play baseball, Buck declined in order to work at Silver Loaf Baking Company, help support the family and pursue a newfound interest: a turquoise 1958 Ford retractable hardtop. In 1959 he met the love of his life, Darlene Ferraro, and they wed in Spokane in July 1961.

As a Christmas present later that year, Buck received his draft notice and, wanting to own his destiny, he quickly enlisted in the Navy completing boot camp in San Diego, CA, and was stationed in Millington, TN and Coronado

and Alameda, CA where he studied electronics. While in Millington Buck underwent surgery for acute appendicitis, contracted a staph infection and ended up in the crowded “dirty surgery ward” where he lost over 30 pounds and nearly his life. When recollecting this experience he joked that the Cuban Missile Crisis was the greatest crisis of his life as his physician was called to another station, his new attending physician changed his treatment and he finally began the road to recovery. Buck would go on to proudly serve as a crew member in the Naval Air Squadron, Patron Nine, performing antisubmarine surveillance and reconnaissance flights over the Gulf of Tonkin and South China Sea.

After being honorably discharged from the Navy, Buck landed his first job at Fairchild Instrumentation in Palo Alto, CA, starting a lifelong career in electronics. He and Darlene purchased their first home in San Jose, CA and started a family in 1968. In 1973 they made the decision to return to Greenacres, and Buck went to work at KeyTronic Corporation where he would remain for nearly 20 years holding positions in instrumentation and automation, and eventually national and international sales roles that took him around the globe. After leaving KeyTronic Corporation Buck joined two longtime friends in starting a business, MilKey, where he would work until he retired in 1997. Upon retirement Buck and Darlene began their newest pastime: traveling as often as possible with family and friends. His last journey was to the Big Island of Hawaii to celebrate Christmas and New Years with Darlene and his sons. “Nothing but blue skies from now on....”

Buck was a man with a kind, humorous and gracious heart, who cared deeply for those that came into his orbit. He was always willing to share his time, his

energy and (if you opened the door) his opinions on matters great and small. (He was known to possess the rare power of draining the hearing aid batteries of others.) Buck was a man of simple pleasures, such as breaking bread with his family and friends, listening to Hank, Willie, Waylon and Johnny (e.g., while mowing his beloved acre of grass), rebuilding, tinkering with and driving cars (i.e., specifically those with a sunroof, moonroof or convertible), playing sports with friends (e.g., the annual KeyTronic softball, basketball and volleyball teams), watching local sports live and/or on TV, and enjoying a hot dog or bologna sandwich at the same time. Much to the chagrin of his sons, he never found an Internet link he did not want to click and, thus, also became an avid collector of computer adware and viruses. Buck's larger-than-life presence will be deeply missed.

Buck was predeceased by his brothers, Harvey and Marvin; and sisters, Vernetta, Lorraine and Judy. He is survived by his wife, Darlene; sons, Michael and Eric; sister, Evelyn; and many nieces, nephews and cousins. The family would like to extend their sincere gratitude to all of the wonderful PeaceHealth medical professionals who cared for Buck in his final days.

Buck's permanent resting place can be found at the Medical Lake Washington State Veterans Cemetery. Their address is 21702 West Espanola Road, Medical Lake, WA 99022. His niche may be found at Section C, Row D, Site 122.

<https://youtu.be/TdQRVTJe1pw?feature=shared>

# Tribute Wall

MM

“*Michael, thank you for sharing this. What wonderful pictures and memories! You dad was clearly a character with excellent taste in headwear (baseball caps, hats, antlers, wreath, marker...my favorite is the marker). I'm so sorry for your family's loss and hope you can find some comfort in each other and these wonderful memories.*

---

**Monica Milligan** - February 07, 2020 at 12:00 AM

TH

“*Michael, I just wanted to let you know how much I enjoyed seeing all the great pictures of you and your family. Your dad was obviously quite the character, and I know how much you all miss him. It's easy to see where you and Eric get some of your awesome sense of humor. Peace and love to you, Eric and your mom.*

---

**Tom Highfield** - February 04, 2020 at 12:00 AM

BK

“*I knew Buck from my days at Key Tronic. We both worked in the sales department. Buck and Darlene were also neighbors of ours at Shorelands at Carlin Bay on Lake Coeur d'Alene> Buck and I would share "sea stories" about our service in the Navy. Although we didn't serve together, we did serve in the same years. I'm very sorry to hear of Buck's passing and send my prayers and condolences to Darlene and the family. I hope to attend any service held in Spokane.*

---

**Bernie Korth** - February 03, 2020 at 12:00 AM

TK

“ Orval Was a squadron mate when I was with VP-9 from 1964 thru 1965. He flew with crew 9. I worked in the maintenance department. I lived in Greenacres for forty years and never knew he was here either. I would like to attend his funeral. Please email me the information for the service in Spokane area thanks.

---

**thomas lyle kays** - February 03, 2020 at 12:00 AM