

# *Capt R. Stephen Waldeck*

*1947 – 14 May 2015*



Ralph Stephen Waldeck passed away at home in Woodland, May 14, 2015. He was born to Ralph and Dorothy Cranston Waldeck in 1947 in Woodland.

While at Woodland High School, Steve played basketball (a team captain); track and field where he won the Jay Sehorn Award for pole-vaulting. He was a quarterback at the first football game for the league championship against arch-rival Davis. Steve was amazed when he looked out at the crowd from the field, and remembered a "sea of orange" in the stands. Attendance for this game was estimated at 5,500. The Wolves beat the Blue Devils: 35 to 7.

During high school, Steve loved working at Cranston Bros for his favorite uncle, Eldon Cranston. They had the same personality and could make each other "crack up" by just glancing at each other.

Steve graduated from Chico State College, with Bachelor degrees in Science and Art and earned an MBA from Central Michigan University.

After college he joined the [US Air Force](#) in 1970 and received a regular commission in 1973. He flew helicopters for 11 years and piloted: Hughes 300, Bell H-12, Bell UH-1 and instructor-pilot on the CH-3 (Jolly Green Giant).

Steve's last 3 years of active duty assignment was with the 1st Helicopter Squadron of the United States Air Force based in Washington, D.C. His Squadron was charged with flying the Executive Branch, members of the Cabinet and foreign dignitaries.

After resigning his commission in 1978, at the rank of Captain, he returned to California and continued flying helicopters with the Air Force Reserve, assigned to the 129th Air Rescue Squadron out of Hayward, CA until 1981.

Steve taught Business Management courses at Woodland Center of Yuba College, and began his tax preparation business as an Enrolled Agent in Woodland.

Steve was a member of Woodland Lodge #81 Free & Accepted Masons and was elected Master of the lodge in 1995 and served as Treasurer since 1996, joined the Ben Ali Shriners and served as president of the Yolo Shrine. Steve was chairman "by acclamation" of refreshments for all parades that the Yolo Shrine participated.

He served as Treasurer to American Legion Woodland Post #77 and chairman of the Legion's County Fair Parking concession at Woodland Mall.

Steve acted as spotter/announcer for the Woodland High School football home games since 2001.

Steve drove a bright red Smart Car, and bragged that he had to fill the gas tank regularly once or twice a year. Steve loved JoAnn, family, his co-workers, his work and sitting on the deck at Shasta Retreat.

He is survived by his sweetheart of 32 years, JoAnn Wright. His children, Stephen B. Waldeck (Erika), Amanda Waldeck, Kelli Palmer (Frank) and Kyndell Wright-Hobson, and grandchildren: Nicole Waldeck and Stephen W. Waldeck, Madeline and Bryson Palmer and Korrbyn Hobson.

Steve is also survived by his brothers and sister, Gary Waldeck (Barbara); John Waldeck (Monica); Connie Beard (Bernard Hendrix); nephews, Nicholas Beard; Schuyler Waldeck-Myers, and Scott Waldeck; nieces, Karen Murvin; Kathy Chudakoff; and Mallory Waldeck; and was predeceased by his parents, sister, Joan Waldeck, brother-in-law Wallace (Larry) Beard, nephews Kenneth Waldeck and Christopher Beard.

Memorials may be made to [Shriners Hospital for Children](#), Office of Development, 2900 Rocky Point Dr., Tampa, FL 33607 or through their website: [www.shrinershospitalforchildren.org/donate](http://www.shrinershospitalforchildren.org/donate) or to a [charity of the donor's choice](#).