



## Chester Curtis Martindale

October 3, 1947 - July 22, 2018

Lieutenant Colonel (USAF Ret) Chester (Chet) Martindale was born in Walnut, Mississippi on October 3rd, 1947. As the son of a Ford Motor Company factory worker he came to love "all things fast" at a very early age. Chet, lifelong friend Fred Prescott and others were constantly building and racing go carts, cars, and motorcycles throughout his youth. Chet graduated from Coffee High School, Florence, Alabama in 1965. At Auburn University he joined the ROTC and was Treasurer and President of his fraternity Chi Phi. Chet earned a degree in Mechanical Engineering in 1969. Upon graduation from Auburn, Chet followed his love of speed into the Air Force where he had a twenty-year career in fighter aircraft both as a navigator and a fighter pilot. At 24 years of age, as a young lieutenant, Chet flew over 300 combat missions during two tours in Southeast Asia, including more than 50 missions over North Vietnam. Chet firmly believed that his almost two years in Southeast Asia were a pivotal time in his life. As Oliver Wendell Holmes, the famous Supreme Court Justice and Civil War veteran once said, Chet's "heart was touched with fire" by his combat experience and he learned that "life is a profound and passionate thing." Chet was awarded four Distinguished Flying Crosses and twenty four Air Medals for heroism and gallantry. After his tours, Chet returned to the States where he was selected to be in the initial cadre of pilots to qualify in the F-16. He served in multiple positions in leadership and training in the "Viper" and was greatly involved with the operational testing of the aircraft as it entered Air Force service in the early 1980s. It was during his

training in the F-16 at Hill Air Force Base in Utah, that Chet met the love of his life, Lynda. They married in 1981. After his retirement in 1990, Chet began his second career flying 16 years for Delta Air Lines, where he excelled qualifying in six different aircraft, and retiring as a Line Check Captain in 2005. In retirement, Chet once again pursued his love of speed as he and Lynda spent most of their free time "alone together" riding their Harley Davidson motorcycles traveling the country. A natural leader, Chet was currently serving as the Director of the Great South Hog Chapter #2505 of Newnan, GA and was the former President of The Breakers condominium association in Ft Walton Beach, Fl. Chet is survived by his wife, Lynda, daughter Lailah Z. Bengelloun-Zahr, son Chad M. Crowley, grandson Gavin A. Crowley and brother Charles Martindale. Condolences can be expressed online at [www.mckoon.com](http://www.mckoon.com)

McKoon Funeral Home & Crematory (770) 253-4580

# Cemetery Details

## McKoon Funeral Home & Crematory

38 Jackson Street  
Newnan, GA 30263  
(770) 253-4580  
care@mckoon.com  
<http://www.mckoon.com>

# Previous Events

## Service

**JUL 31.**

Service planned for later date

# Tribute Wall

KC

“ I am so sorry to hear of Chet's passing! As new pilots at Delta, we shared a crash pad in Riverdale. I always enjoyed hanging out and talking with Chet. He was such a nice person!

*Kent Carnley*

---

**kent carnley** - October 10, 2018 at 12:33 PM

BB

“ As one of Chet's Chi Phi Fraternity brothers at Auburn, I remember the “love” he jvashed on his beautiful burgundy Corvette Stingray, proclaiming it “the fastest car in Alabama.” I don't recall anyone doubting that title! Blue skies, Chester!

---

**Bob Besal** - August 19, 2018 at 01:22 PM

SL

“ We were buddies back when we each had Cushman Supereagle Motorscooters and explored the outback of Florence, Alabama. Thanks for good memories of youth, when life was less complicated and dangerous than today. Godspeed, good man and sometime companion of youth. My condolences to his family. Stan De Loach

---

**Stan De Loach** - August 07, 2018 at 08:57 PM

DF

“ I graduated with Chet from Coffee High School. A lifetime friend. He will be missed but always displayed the qualities of a gentleman he was. A true patriot. A man who lived his dream! D Faulkner class of 65.

---

**David Faulkner** - August 05, 2018 at 08:27 AM

KW

“ so sorry for your loss...another gentleman pilot ...for us to be blessed to have worked with on our flights. In Christ, Kitty Willett-retired f/a

---

**katherine willett** - August 03, 2018 at 05:10 PM

JG

*I, along with many others, had the pleasure of calling Chet a true friend. I the pleasure of logging countless miles riding saddle bag to saddle bag beside him and Lynda thru some of our country's most picturesque countryside. Chet was one of the most solid, well put together, person I've ever known and had the combined fortitude and integrity of ten men. He will be remembered often and missed eternally.*

---

**Joshua Griffin** - May 06, 2020 at 11:16 AM