



George Riley Rowan Jr.

April 12, 1932 - April 29, 2022

GEORGE RILEY ROWAN, JR.

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Colonel George “Rip” Riley Rowan, Jr. USA (Retired), the son of the late Colonel and Mrs. George Riley Rowan USMC, was born April 12, 1932, in Baltimore, Maryland and passed away April 29, 2022, while surrounded by his loving family and dear friends.

After growing up in various cities around the world with his military family, Rip attended Georgetown University and was a member of the varsity swim team, served as the Senior Class President, and was a cadet in the ROTC program. After graduating in 1954 with a BS degree in Foreign Service, he was commissioned an Army Second Lieutenant. Rip requested immediate active duty and began his 28-year military career at Fort Sill, Oklahoma. He was a paratrooper with the elite 82nd Airborne Division in Fort Bragg, North Carolina and served in Vietnam as an artillery Battalion Commander. The final seven years of Rip’s military career included service with the Army & Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES) as Commander of the Korea Regional Exchange, Operations Deputy in Germany, and Chief of the Washington, DC office at the Pentagon. After retiring from military service as a Colonel in 1982, Rip continued to advocate for service members as President of the Armed Forces Marketing Council for 26 years.

In retirement, Rip lived with his beloved wife of 49 years, Joan, in Regency at Dominion Valley in Haymarket, Virginia, where he was an active member of the community. He loved golfing, bowling, and spending time with friends. Rip and Joan enjoyed traveling and were fortunate to visit many countries around the world. More than anything, Rip was a devoted husband, proud father and father-in-law, and an especially proud grandfather.

Rip is survived by his wife, Joan, his daughters, Kristin (Michael) Oakes, and Laurie (Kent) Russell, son Michael Flynn, and grandchildren: Connor, Brendan, and Taylor Oakes; Cole and Riley Russell. Preceding him in death were his parents and his sister, Eloise (Ike) Fenton.

Family and friends will gather for a visitation on Friday, May 6 from 4:00-6:00 PM at Pierce Funeral Home, 9609 Center St., Manassas, Virginia. A memorial service will be held at 2:00 PM on Saturday, May 7 at St. Thomas à Becket Catholic Church, 1421 Wiehle Ave, Reston, Virginia with a reception immediately following at River Bend Country Club, 375 Walker Rd, Great Falls, Virginia. A Mass of Christian Burial will follow at a later date when he will be laid to rest at Arlington National Cemetery.

In lieu of flowers, donations can be made in Rip's memory to Wounded Warrior Project (<https://www.woundedwarriorproject.org/>)

Cemetery Details

Arlington National Cemetery

Arlington, VA 22211
<http://www.arlingtoncemetery.mil/>

Previous Events

Visitation

MAY 6. 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM (ET)

Pierce Funeral Home
9609 Center St.
Manassas, VA 20110
(703) 257-6028
pfh@piercefh.com
<https://www.piercefh.com>

Memorial Service

MAY 7. 2:00 PM (ET)

St. Thomas A. Becket Catholic Church
1421 Wiehle Avenue
Reston, VA

Tribute Wall

RB

“ During my tenure as the Director of the Defense Commissary Agency (1992-1999) Rip Rowan was more than a friend and professional colleague. He was a valued and trusted advisor. Hardly a week went by between phone calls or visits to my office. Although he represented some of the largest suppliers in the Military Resale industry, he was always mindful and respectful of the limitations imposed on government employees when dealing with industry. He could thoroughly break down and explain the most difficult issues, and he was consistently able to navigate choppy waters to arrive at common sense, practical solutions which were mutually beneficial to both government and industry. Although on occasion we probably agreed to disagree on something, I cannot recall a single instance. Even on jam-packed days, i would always carve out time for him when he needed to converse because I knew that his counsel would be well worth my time.

Wynne and I especially enjoyed socializing with Rip and Joan at professional gatherings. They were so much fun to be around. Their spirit and good cheer were infectious. Had retirement circumstances for the Rowans and Beales placed us closer together, the Rowans would likely have been among our best friends. That is how much we enjoyed their company.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to Joan and her family at this difficult time. From one old soldier to another, my parting words are "See you on the high ground."

Dick Beale
MG, US Army (Retired)

Richard Beale - May 07, 2022 at 02:26 PM

JD

“ Like Rip, I also served as a military commander of exchanges in the Pacific. That experience gave him a great understanding of the needs of BOTH the military members and their families. He used that experience to make many improvements in services provided. He made a positive and lasting difference in the lives of thousands of military members throughout the world..

Rip also had a wicked sense of humor and we would often share funny stories and jokes. It would make your day to talk to him.

*Jim Donahoe, Col USAF (Ret)
President, Friends of Fisher House St Louis*

Jim Donahoe - May 06, 2022 at 09:38 PM