

Colonel Stetson R. Cowan, 59, of Mesa, took his last flight Sunday, July 6, 2008. He was born on December 16, 1948 in Eastland, Texas, to William Kenneth Cowan and Eleanor Rowles Cowan. Cowan graduated from Colorado City High School in Colorado City, Texas in 1967. He graduated from the US Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, CO., in 1971. He went on to pilot training at Vance AFB in Enid, Oklahoma, then Randolph AFB, Texas, for pilot instructor training. He flew T-38's and other fixed-wing aircraft until he decided helicopters were more fun. Other assignments included: Hurlburt Field, FL., Howard AFB, Panama, Kirtland AFB, New Mexico. He was then chosen to attend the U.S. Navy's Test Pilot School at Patuxent River, Maryland, then on to Edwards AFB where he flew many experimental aircraft and then taught at the U.S. Air Force Test Pilot School. While there, he received his Master's Degree from Golden Gate University, and became a member of The Society of Experimental Test Pilots. (SETP).

In 1989, he became the Commander of the 6514th Test Squadron at Hill AFB, near Ogden, Utah. His last Air Force assignment was Wright-Patterson AFB, in Dayton, Ohio. After 2 years of Ohio weather, he was thrilled to be offered a job at The Boeing Company, Mesa, where he was the happiest as a Test Pilot for the Apache Helicopter. He also worked on the unmanned X-50A Dragonfly, and then as a Systems Safety Engineer. Throughout his fight with cancer, he continued to work at Boeing until the very end. Colonel Cowan was a member of the Order of Daedalians, Flight 82, Mesa. He was happiest around helicopters, airplanes, a golf course, family and all his best buddies.

Cowan is survived by his wife of almost 19 years, Major Tess Taft Cowan,(USAF, Ret) and their niece, Theresa Bennett. In lieu of flowers, the family would appreciate donations to Cowan's favorite church, St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Mesa, where he served as the Senior Warden.

Bunker Mortuary is handling the cremation, and **services will be held this Saturday, July 12 at 10:00 am, at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 322 N. Horne**, (just south of University Drive) Mesa, 85203. Military friends are welcome to wear their uniforms, and others are welcome to wear red or blue, for Military Honors. He fought pancreatic/liver/stomach cancer for more than 6 years and never complained. Colonel Cowan died at home, under the care of Hospice of the Valley and his family. Rest eternal grant to him, and let light perpetual shine upon him.