



## **William Laird "Bill" Brooks**

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William Laird "Bill" Brooks, an Alpine resident since 1976, slipped peacefully from this earth at sunset Monday surrounded by his family. He was 75.

A memorial celebration will be held Sunday, March 1 at 4 p.m. at Kokernot Field.

He was a husband; father, brother, son, uncle and friend.

Perhaps his greatest calling was as the grandfather of four boys to whom he was affectionately known as Chief.

Mr. Brooks was raised on Air Force bases around the world and enjoyed many beaches and baseball fields. He graduated from El Paso Burges High School (1963), and received a music scholarship to Texas Western University, which later became UTEP.

He volunteered for the U.S. Army and served two tours in Vietnam as an intelligence officer and was in the country during the Tet Offensive.

On leave from the Army, he met his beloved Margie on a blind date, and they spent the evening trading insults. He proposed two weeks later and went back to Vietnam. The couple were wed on Sept. 26, 1969.

Their first daughter, Jae, was born in Maryland in 1972. Betse was born in El Paso in 1976, a couple of months before the family moved to Alpine. Stephanie was born in Alpine in 1978.

Mr. Brooks spent some time as an apprentice in his brother-in-law's print shop in El Paso and decided to move his family to Alpine and start his own business. It was called The Territorial Printer, the eponym of many championship Pony League baseball teams.

In 1979, he purchased the Alpine Avalanche with a couple of partners. He moved the print shop in with the newspaper and added the office supply store.

He sold the newspaper and office supply 10 years later but continued to run the printer.

In 1994, he started researching a new technology called broadband internet, and then started Brooks Data Consultants, the first internet service provider in rural West Texas.

Following 9/11, he felt a pull to once again serve his country and sought work with the U.S. Border Patrol. He started in the intelligence department, but later became the Public Affairs Officer for the Big Bend Sector, and eventually the entire Southwest border region.

He finally retired in 2015, and spent time traveling to ballparks and Latter-Day Saints temples with Margie and playing with his grand boys.

It was announced this week that he was awarded the ARRL West Texas Section Ham of the Year. He was among the first to respond to the tragic Saragosa tornado in 1987 and was crucial to communication during the wildfires in 2011.

Mr. Brooks was a soldier, patriot, entrepreneur, musician, actor, race car driver, HAM radio operator, championship baseball coach, master of ceremonies, and a loyal fan of the Yankees and the o6 Cowboys, Sul Ross Lobos, and Alpine Bucks.

He even did a little cowboying when his friends asked for help with round-up.

He was a past president of the Alpine Chamber of Commerce, a founder of the Texas Cowboy Poetry Gathering, and a leader in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints.

In between all of that, he was the life of the party. He could tell a joke and he could take one.

He taught his daughters to pursue whatever they wanted, and to stand up for what they believed in with the constant counsel to be bold and honest.

He adored Margie. Theirs was a love story for the ages.

Mr. Brooks is survived by Margie and their girls, two sons-in-law, John Sublett and Joe Esparza; grandsons Noble and Will Sublett, and Jake and Ethan Esparza; two sisters and their families, Ann Pearson of El Paso and Susan Yeager of Las Cruces, New Mexico; his sisters-in-law, Winnie Brooks and family of Austin, Texas, Sandy Sanford and family of Idaho, and Bobbie Barney and family of Utah; and brother-in-law Dean Rogers of Georgia.

He was preceded in death by his best friend and brother, Johnny Brooks.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation to the Alpine Cowboys or the Big Bend Amateur Radio Club to assist them in their pursuits of Chief's favorite pastimes.

Services have been entrusted to Alpine Memorial Funeral Home. Online condolences may be left at [alpinememorialfuneralhome.com](http://alpinememorialfuneralhome.com).