



Colonel Stephen H. Cowles (USAF Ret.), 85, passed away peacefully on October 14, 2023, from Parkinson's disease and Covid.

Steve was born to the late Herman Cowles and Helen Smith in Evansville, Indiana. He graduated from Bosse High School, attended Purdue University, and earned his degree in Social Sciences from Coker

College in Hartsville, South Carolina. His master's degree in Public Administration was earned from Golden State University.

In 1959, Steve started his Air Force career as a navigator on the KC-97 at Mt. Home AFB, Idaho. In 1966, Steve earned his pilot wings at Enid AFB, Oklahoma. He went on to Williams AFB in Arizona, where he taught other young officers to fly.

Steve did a year-long remote tour in Udorn, Thailand, where he flew 99 combat missions in the RF-4C, 56 of them were over North Vietnam. He was a senior pilot with more than 5,000 flying hours.

As Steve's career progressed, he was selected to be the Base Commander at RAF Alconbury, England. He would later become its Director of Operations.

After 31-plus years in the Air Force, Steve retired in 1989 at Langley AFB. He again went back to school and took classes in accounting, which helped him prepare taxes for Jackson-Hewitt for the next 30 years.

Steve was an active member of Immaculate Conception Catholic Church, where he participated with the Young at Heart Committee, served as a lead Eucharistic minister, assisted with funeral receptions, and was on the ICCC Foundation Committee.

The funeral Mass will be celebrated on Tuesday, October 24, 2023, at 11:00 a.m., in Immaculate Conception Catholic Church with a reception to follow.

Left to cherish his memory are his loving wife of 63 years, Gayle Ammons Cowles, and sons Stephen and Michael (Ken). Steve was also predeceased by his sister, Linda Sue Cowles Camuso.

The family is very grateful for the wonderful nurses, aides, and staff at the Newport Nursing & Rehabilitation Center, who lovingly cared for Steve with patience, understanding, and lots of hugs for their “Mr. Blue Eyes.”

In lieu of flowers, please consider a memorial contribution to Immaculate Conception Catholic Church Food Pantry or the Funeral Reception Committee.