



Melvin Warren "Sam" Bilich

October 3, 1932 - April 11, 2024

Melvin was born in Baltimore, Maryland. He grew up in Cape Charles, Virginia living one block from the bay, where he enjoyed fishing and hunting. During his college days he decided to enter the Air Force. While in training at Ellington Air Force Base in Houston, Texas, he visited Hillel (Jewish student center) and met his future wife, Doris Sue Lerman (Susie) from Texas City, and studying at the University of Houston. They had a short engagement and were married on September 1, 1957 at the Galvez Hotel in Galveston. Mel and Sue celebrated their 66th wedding anniversary in 2023. Mel is survived by his wife, Sue, their four children, Lindy, Jimmy, Steve and Brian. Along with their spouses and children whom Mel loved deeply.

Mel became a navigation instructor at Ellington Field. Following his assignment at Ellington Field he was transferred to the Strategic Air Command where he served as an aircrew Radar Navigator {RN} in the B-47 Medium Jet Bomber and later as RN in B-52 Heavy Bomber. In 1971 he was assigned to Vietnam where he flew 100 combat missions in EC 47s earning him the Distinguished Flying Cross for heroism or extraordinary achievement while participating in aerial flights involving operations that are not routine. His last assignment before retiring was to Barksdale AFB, Louisiana, where he served as the Chief of the Bombing and Navigation training department. Mel retired as a Lt. Col. from the Air Force in 1975, moved his family to Austin to attend graduate school at UT and received his Masters Degree in Community

and Regional Planning. He was then employed by Lumbermen's Investment Corporation, Carlson Engineering and Associates, and as an Independent Contractor until retirement in November 2006.

His hobbies were creating stained glass designs, wood carving, fly tying for fly fishing and he enjoyed playing golf. Mel had a great sense of humor and loved telling jokes. He was also an avid reader.

Donations in Mel's memory may be made to the Austin Food Bank or Jewish War Veterans Post 757.

Previous Events

Graveside Funeral Service

APR 15. 2:00 PM (CT)

Austin Memorial Park
2800 Hancock Dr
Austin, TX 78731

Computer Accessible Graveside Service

APR 15. 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM (CT)

Austin Natural Funerals Facebook Page
<http://facebook.com/austinnaturalfunerals>

A live stream will appear on the Austin Natural Funerals Facebook page a few minutes before 2PM. A Facebook account is not required to watch. If a pop-up window appears asking you to log in click "not now" and the live stream will be available for you to watch. If the "not now" button does not appear, scroll down on the page and it will come up for you to select.

Tribute Wall

#2

“ *I will always honor & love you dad, and i will honor & love mom too. Josie is now in heaven with you sir, now you will have a great pet to keep you company*

#2son - December 04, 2024 at 10:30 PM



“ *1 file added to the album Service Recording*



Austin Natural Funerals - May 31, 2024 at 04:09 PM