

Robert Edward "Bob" Weathersby, Jr., U.S. Army, Ret., departed this life on Thursday, May 14, 2020 after failing health for over a year. He was 82. He was born on December 20, 1937 in New Hebron, Lawrence Co., MS into a committed military family. His father, Robert "Ned" Weathersby, was a World War I Veteran, his brother, a WW II veteran, Korean War and Vietnam Veteran, and his only sister, a U.S. Army WAC in World War II. His Mother, also a strong supporter of the military, was Dudley Banks Weathersby. Bob graduated from New Hebron High School in 1955, received his B.S. in Industrial Engineering from Mississippi State University in 1959 as a ROTC student and immediately upon graduation entered active service in the U. S. Army. His distinguished military career included three tours of duty in the Vietnam War, where he was a helicopter pilot. Along the way, he married his sweetheart, Stella Swords, on Jan. 1, 1963, who reverently and loyally supported her husband's patriotism and civic duty. Major Weathersby retired in 1980 after 23 years active service. Along the way, Major Weathersby was honored for his bravery and courage with multiple medals including the Army Aviator Badge, Senior Army Aviator Badge, Master Army Aviators Badge, Distinguished Flying Cross, Air Medal (1st-30th Award), Purple Heart, Army Commendation Medal with 2 Oak Leaf Clusters, Meritorious Unit Citation, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Bronze Star Medal with 1st Oak Leaf Cluster, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm and 1st Oak Leaf Cluster, Expert Badge Pistol 38 & 45, the Vietnam Staff Service Medal, First Class, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Silver Star, the Meritorious Service Medal, and the Mississippi Magnolia Medal from the Mississippi National Guard, the 1st non-Guard member to receive such an award. Major Weathersby, while not on tours of duty, spent much of his military career as a Pilot Training Instructor at Fort Rucker, AL, and spent several years with the 155th as a helicopter pilot trainer. His family chose the Tupelo area as their permanent home in 1976 and raised their sons here. Not the retiring type, Bob had a 15-year career with Billy Hughes at Rosehill Furniture before again retiring. He spent his last working years as an employee of Walmart in Tupelo. Bob and Stella were members of the Furrs Baptist Church where he enjoyed the music and preaching. Bob's penchant for conversation was legendary. He thoroughly enjoyed visiting select friends and never met a stranger. Papaw loved his grandchildren and great-granddaughter and doted over them every chance he could. A grateful family and a grateful Nation expresses appreciation for his distinguished service in the U. S. Army. Farewell, good and faithful Soldier!

A service, with military honors, will be held at 1 PM Monday, May 18, 2020 at the Pavilion at the North Mississippi Veterans Cemetery (104 S. Depot Avenue) in Kilmichael, MS with his former pastor, Bro. Steve Cohea, officiating. Burial will follow in the Veterans Cemetery there. Holland Funeral Directors - Tupelo Chapel is honored to be serving their friends. There will be no public visitation due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Those who may wish to contact the family to express condolences may do so at hollandfuneraldirectors@comcast.net. Bob is survived by his wife, Stella of Belden; his two sons, Robert E. "Bobby" Weathersby and his wife, Cindy of Poplarville, MS, and Michael Weathersby and his wife, Amy of Tupelo; his beloved grandchildren, Haley Wood (Mason) of Laurel, Hayes Weathersby (Payton) of Hattiesburg, Jay Linley, Kealy Weathersby, and Keagen Weathersby, all of Tupelo; 1 great-granddaughter, Anne Parker Wood of Laurel; 2 sisters-in-law; Nancy Hopkins (Al) of Spotsylvania, VA, and Mary Swords of Peach City, GA; a very special next door neighbor, Leah Schrock and daughters of Belden; and several nieces and nephews and their families. Bob was preceded in death by his parents, 1 sister, Joy W. Polk, and 1 brother, Banks Weathersby. Flowers should be delivered to Holland Funeral Directors, 5281 Cliff Gookin Blvd., Tupelo, MS 38801.
