



## Col. Houston T. "Terry" Hawkins, Ret. United States Air Force (USAF)

May 17, 1941 - June 14, 2021

Terry Hawkins of Los Alamos, New Mexico—faithful disciple of Christ; devoted son, brother, husband, father, and grandfather; distinguished USAF veteran; Cold War patriot; and strategist and innovator—began his journey home early in the morning on June 14, 2021. Ultimately, he died from complications related to an immunotherapy treatment for metastatic kidney cancer that he had received in February 2021. At the time of his passing, his loving wife of 55 years, Martha Butts Hawkins, was by his side.

Terry was born in Seneca, South Carolina to the Reverend Thomas "Houston" and Mary Elaine Moore Hawkins. Shortly after his birth, his father enlisted in the US Navy and was deployed to the Pacific Theater during WWII. Terry's paternal grandparents, Silas Drayton and Rular Ann McKee Hawkins, helped Mary raise him during Houston's absence. Terry grew up in the tiny mill village of Newry, South Carolina, alongside his youngest uncle and aunts in a faith- and joy-filled family.

Terry was the eldest of three children born to Houston and Mary. He and his brother, Roger, and sister, Rachel, were taught to love God and to serve others in accordance with His will. Throughout his 80 years and following much professional and personal success, Terry was steadfast in his faith and unwavering in his commitment to the Lord. His success did not change him, and his kindness, humility, and gentle spirit were testaments to his faith. Terry always preferred to turn the spotlight into a floodlight to shine upon those who were fortunate to have met him along the journey. At the end of his life, he assured his family that God would take care of him and that he was looking forward to being reunited with those who have preceded him in death.

Terry graduated from Seneca High School in 1959 with honors and attended Clemson College (now, Clemson University) as a Chemistry undergraduate student and member of the ROTC program. He worked several part-time jobs and lived at home so that he could afford to attend college. He completed his BS in Chemistry in 1963 and was a Distinguished Military Graduate of Clemson. He was commissioned upon graduation and was stationed at Wright Patterson Air Force Base (AFB) in Dayton, Ohio. It was during his

return home on leave that he asked Martha—the youngest daughter of Stephen and Helen Knox Butts, and whom he had known for most of his life—on a date. That date sparked a beautiful romance and Terry and Martha were married on October 3, 1965.

In 1967, Terry was deployed to Kadena Air Base in Okinawa, Japan to serve in the Vietnam War. During his year of service in Southeast Asia, he led a reconnaissance avionics unit and was a technical advisor to the Commander of the 313th Air Division on reconnaissance matters.

Upon his return to the US, Terry and Martha moved to several different military installations as he advanced through the ranks as a USAF Officer. The couple were stationed at McClellan (Sacramento, California) and Patrick (Cocoa Beach, Florida) AFBs. During these years, the couple welcomed two daughters, Heather and Holly, and forged lifelong friendships with other military families. While at McClellan, Terry completed a degree program in law through the LaSalle Extension University. While at Patrick AFB, he developed his skills as a radiochemist with the Air Force Technical Application Center, performing thousands of radiochemical analyses of nuclear debris and developing new forensic technologies and methodologies. Terry was then promoted to Lieutenant Colonel and the family moved to the Washington, DC area, where he completed three consecutive assignments.

From 1979 to 1983, Terry was the leader of the Defense Intelligence Agency's Nuclear Energy Division where he also served on the Joint Atomic Energy Intelligence Committee and co-chaired the Department of Defense's Hard Target Kill Committee. He subsequently served as the Special Assistant to the Secretary of Defense for Air Force Nuclear Matters until 1987. In this capacity, he advised Secretaries of Defense (SecDef) Caspar Weinberger and Frank Carlucci on decisions pertaining to USAF nuclear weaponry, prepared the SecDef position paper on nuclear winter, and led foreign assistance programs pertaining to hardening against nuclear effects. Finally, after transferring to the Defense Nuclear Agency in 1987, he led the formation and growth of the Defense Threat Reduction Office (now the Defense Threat Reduction Agency). He retired from the USAF as a Colonel after 25 years of service. Soon after, Terry joined the Los Alamos National Laboratory (LANL) where he continued his service to the nation for more than 30 more years.

Terry was a senior-level manager and technical leader at LANL who led several organizations through challenges resulting from significant technical challenges and dynamic change. Throughout this stage of his career, he led major technical programs aimed at assessing, detecting, preventing, and reversing the proliferation of weapons of

mass destruction and the use of those weapons by international terrorists. He served as deputy and division leader of both the International Technology and Nonproliferation and International Security divisions at LANL. Additionally, he served as an acting director of the LANL Office of Counterintelligence.

At the time of his passing, Terry was a LANL Senior Fellow assigned to the Principal Associate Directorate for Global Security. He concurrently served on the Advisory Board of the American Center for Democracy, New York, New York; as a Distinguished Research Fellow with the Institute of Physical Science, McLean, Virginia; and as an advisor for the Marshall Institute for Interdisciplinary Research, Huntington, West Virginia. Terry was previously the Director of the LANL DoD Programs in the Office of the Associate Director for Threat Reduction.

As an internationally recognized expert on modern terrorism, particularly terrorism involving the potential use of weapons of mass destruction, Terry served on the Presidential Panel on National Infrastructure Protection. He delivered invited lectures worldwide on this topic. For his efforts, he received the Aviation Week & Space Technology 2000 Laurel Award and two Valley Forge Freedoms Foundation Medallions. Most notably, he received the Chief Justice Earl Warren Medallion, the highest honor granted by the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA) to non-CIA persons, for his work in counterterrorism.

Terry received numerous awards and recognition for his work including two Defense Superior Service Medals, the Legion of Merit, two Air Force Superior Service Medals, the Air Force Commendation Medal, and numerous service medals, including the Humanitarian Service Medal, the Korean Defense Medal and the Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm. From his tenure with the USAF, he holds patents in graphite fiber reinforcements and super hard-structures.

Terry was a Deacon and adult Sunday School teacher at White Rock Baptist Church in White Rock, New Mexico, for more than three decades. He served as a member of the J. Robert Oppenheimer Memorial Committee for many years. He and Martha traveled internationally with a close group of Los Alamos-based friends and enjoyed their time in the US with their four grandchildren.

Terry is survived by his wife, Martha, aunt Lucille Hawkins Sanders, aunt Jean Hawkins Roper, brother Roger Hawkins (Marcia), sister Rachel Hawkins Bolt, daughters Dr. Heather Hawkins Erpenbeck (Gregory) and Holly Hawkins Saporito (Nick), four grandchildren, Eli Erpenbeck and Charlotte, Sawyer, and Harper Saporito, and numerous

cousins, nephews, nieces, and lifelong friends. Terry was preceded in death by his grandparents, parents, uncles, several aunts, in-laws, sisters and brothers-in-law, and grandson, James Christian Erpenbeck.

Services for Col. Houston T. "Terry" Hawkins will be conducted at 11 AM on Wednesday, June 23, 2021 at the Davenport Funeral Home Chapel, West Union, South Carolina. Visitation will be at 10 AM, one hour prior to the funeral service. The interment will follow at the family plot at Oconee Memorial Park, Seneca. Thereafter, friends and family are invited to Poplar Springs Baptist Church, Walhalla, for a reception honoring the memory of a son, brother, husband, father, grandfather, uncle, cousin, friend, and a true disciple of Christ.

In lieu of flowers, the family asks those wishing to honor Terry's memory to consider contributing to the J. Robert Oppenheimer Memorial Committee (JROMC) in his name. A scholarship will be established in honor of Terry. Contributions may be sent to: JROMC, P.O. Box 220, Los Alamos, NM 87544

# Cemetery

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**Oconee Memorial Park**  
1923 Blue Ridge Boulevard  
Seneca, SC, 29672

# Events

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**JUN 23 Visitation 10:00AM - 11:00AM**  
Davenport Funeral Home, Inc.  
311 South Carolina 11, West Union, SC, US, 29696

**JUN 23 Funeral Service 11:00AM**  
Davenport Funeral Home, Inc.  
311 South Carolina 11, West Union, SC, US, 29696

# Comments

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“ An external video has been added.



**Davenport Funeral Home** - June 22 at 02:22 PM

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“ I'm sorry for the loss of Terry....I appreciated his quiet and down-to-earth way. Terry and Martha were very much a pleasure to work for and I think fondly of both of them often. We need more people in this world like Terry and it's a great loss for us all.  
Tim Acomb

**Tim Acomb** - July 20 at 11:23 PM

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“ Heather,

I am sorry to see this news. I know that your Dad was a great influence in your life--including attending Clemson University and choosing your course of study. I send my sympathies on this great loss to you and your family.

Carol Haertling

**Carol Haertling** - July 06 at 10:52 AM

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“ Sorry for the loss to the Hawkins family. Terry would always take the time to have a few words with me even though intellectually and career wise he was far superior. He carried his success in life well and related to everyone as his equal.

George Hagedorn and family

**George Hagedorn** - July 01 at 11:52 AM

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“ So sorry for your loss Heather.

Dana

Dana Dattelbaum - July 01 at 09:55 AM

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“ Martha and family,

Please accept our deepest condolences. It was a pleasure to get to know Terry a little more as his neighbor. He always had a smile and a calming presence...even when we cut a cable line to your home while trenching in our backyard. When preparing to travel for his last cancer treatments, he seemed especially calm and ready to accept whatever God had in store for him. May he be at peace tending God's gardens. May his memories help ease your pain.

Ken/Jim and Laura McClellan

Laura McClellan - June 27 at 06:48 PM

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“ I worked for Terry for a short time at LANL and became a friend. He was one of the most honorable, patriotic, and hard-working people I have met in my life, and a true friend. His contributions to our national security should never be forgotten: one of those unsung heroes who quietly make a huge difference in our national defense policy and security.

Personally, he was unassuming, courteous, and kind. He never bragged, always was willing to listen, and loved his family, his garden, his friends, and his profession. I will miss him, as will his Country, his family, and all of his associates.

JAMES HALL - June 26 at 10:24 PM

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“ Wayne F Barton sent a virtual gift in memory of Col. Houston T. "Terry" Hawkins, Ret. United States Air Force (USAF)



Wayne F Barton - June 26 at 09:59 PM

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“ Wayne F Barton sent a virtual gift in memory of Col. Houston T. "Terry" Hawkins, Ret. United States Air Force (USAF)



Wayne F Barton - June 26 at 09:59 PM

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“ Martha and family. you have my sincerest condolences.

I will definitely miss Terry. He was a great guy and enjoyed all our conversations and interactions. I was hoping he would come back to work very soon, but God had another path for him. Rest in peace Terry, I will miss you, and I will see you on the other side. Clear the path for the rest of us.

Carmella Carter



Carmella Carter - June 23 at 01:58 PM

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“ Our deepest sympathy to Col. Terry Hawkins family, from your childhood neighbors and friends in the Corinth community. Our thoughts and prayers are with Roger, Rachel, Martha and the children.

Norma Jean, Troy and Derrell Hawkins

**Troy Hawkins** - June 23 at 10:51 AM

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“ Uncle T was just the very best in every way . . . his calm demeanor, quiet intellect, and grace filled spirit were so welcoming. We will miss you Uncle T, and we are so thankful for the times we had together, and we look forward to seeing you again In Glory. All our Love, Jana Beth & Jimmy.



**Jim Eidson** - June 22 at 08:53 PM

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“ My husband grew up in Newry and introduced me to Terry and Martha. I have great memories of our trip to Newry, Northern Ireland back in 1994. I also knew the family from my years at Lila Doyle. What a wonderful, Godly family! My heartfelt condolences for this loss. Praying for comfort for all.

**Iris Manley** - June 22 at 08:36 PM

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“ I will always miss the daily conversations with Terry while carpooling to and from the Lab. One day we were so deep into talk, we collided with a large deer on Pajarito Road! No injuries to all, but that day we both remember. We remember Terry's passion for gardening and cooking especially his fantastic chilidogs! We feel so thankful to have known Terry. He was a true friend! Please accept our deepest sympathies and prayers Martha, Heather, and Holly. God Bless Terry! From the Hodson Family

**Stephen Hodson** - June 22 at 03:01 PM

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“ From Steve & Linda Hodson and Family purchased the Basket Full of Wishes for the family of Col. Houston T. "Terry" Hawkins, Ret. United States Air Force (USAF).



From Steve & Linda Hodson and Family - June 22 at 02:59 PM

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“ Terry truly was my idol. I first met him in the 1970's at a DIA meeting. I knew him as a major and Lt. Col and was elated when he made Colonel. I was thrilled when he got the call to work at LANL. Terry was well respected as an analyst and quickly rose in stature and became my Division Leader. His background in the Intelligence arena will be sorely missed and in many cases will be irreplaceable. So USAF career officer, student of Law, Deacon in Southern Baptist Church, husband of beautiful Martha, father of two girls, analyst and Leader in field of non-proliferation, I will miss your advice and opinions. Terry, rest in piece. You certainly are in God's hands. Jim Kowalczyk

james kowalczyk - June 22 at 02:47 PM

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“ I hardly know how to record my feelings and thoughts about Terry. Probably one of the most intelligent men I personally know. His childhood and his entire life are so impressive. He once told me about his grandmother taking him into the woods to teach him how to survive.

Terry's career is phenomenal. His accomplishments are almost beyond belief. His commitment to his Lord, family, and country were extraordinary. In all of this Terry was so down to earth and easy to visit and converse with. The family he and Martha raised is a tribute to both of them .

He was a man who loved God, loved his family, and loved his country.

His travels around the world prepared him and made him a great Bible teacher. My wife and I so much enjoyed his teachings. Most of all, we loved them for who they are.

Thank you Terry, for all your work and efforts to make the world better and safe.

Rest in our Lord.

Bobby and Wanda Poe

Matthew 25:23

I believe you could write a history book about the lives of Terry, Martha and Family.

**bobby poe** - June 22 at 02:26 PM

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“ Pam Sluder-Leonard lit a candle in memory of Col. Houston T. "Terry" Hawkins, Ret. United States Air Force (USAF)



**Pam Sluder-Leonard** - June 22 at 07:55 AM

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“ Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Col. Houston T. "Terry" Hawkins, Ret. United States Air Force (USAF).



June 22 at 12:32 AM

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“ As a former pastor of Martha and Terry during their Florida assignment, I have thanked God for the privilege of serving them for their love and service to our Heavenly Father, and their tremendous love and support for me in our ministry. Together. Love and blessings to Martha and the girls. Jack Green  
jaggreen2@gmail.com

John G. (Jack) Green (Rev) - June 22 at 12:10 AM

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“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Col. Houston T. "Terry" Hawkins, Ret. United States Air Force (USAF).



June 21 at 09:40 PM

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“ God bless you, Martha, Heather and Holly. You are all in our thoughts and prayers. Terry was a great friend and mentor. He would always cheerfully review my work and provide sage advice during my tenure at Los Alamos. I truly appreciate Terry having provided a sound listening ear. My favorite Terry quote is, “More Americans walked on the Moon than the number of Americans who had been inside the Chinese nuclear test site at Lop Nor.” Terry was among those few. I also enjoyed Terry’s Adult Bible Class teachings and the in depth discussions we would have on Biblical hermeneutics. I will certainly miss you Terry!

Frank Pabian - June 21 at 07:33 PM

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“ With love from Martha’s NM Mah Jongg Group. purchased the Dreams From the Heart Bouquet for the family of Col. Houston T. "Terry" Hawkins, Ret. United States Air Force (USAF).



**With love from Martha’s NM Mah Jongg Group.** - June 21 at 05:06 PM

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“ From Frank and Celeste Pabian purchased the Country Basket Blooms for the family of Col. Houston T. "Terry" Hawkins, Ret. United States Air Force (USAF).



**From Frank and Celeste Pabian** - June 21 at 04:28 PM

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“ Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Col. Houston T. "Terry" Hawkins, Ret. United States Air Force (USAF).



June 21 at 02:34 PM

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“ With a deep feeling of loss and condolences to his family and well wishers, I recall the time Terry and I went to get OK for organizing an international conference on confronting terrorism to the Associate Director. After 30 mins of inconclusive discussion, I said, on our way back, in frustration -- Terry what a waste of time. Terry looked at me with a smile and a twinkle in his eye and said "he did not say no". And we went forward without looking over our shoulders. Terry was straightforward, a great friend and wonderful mind to banter with. He found ways to do things without fuss. A giant in the field of security and counter intelligence, he will be deeply missed.  
Rajan Gupta

Rajan Gupta - June 21 at 01:53 PM

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“ Cherish the wonderful memories, Martha and family. I do. Senior managers at Los Alamos National Laboratory play an important role in our nation's security, but it's not without it lighter moments.



Joseph C. Giles - June 21 at 01:05 PM

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“ Kathy Addis lit a candle in memory of Col. Houston T. "Terry" Hawkins, Ret. United States Air Force (USAF)



Kathy addis - June 21 at 12:12 PM

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“ Magnificent Life Spray was purchased for the family of Col. Houston T. "Terry" Hawkins, Ret. United States Air Force (USAF).



June 21 at 11:51 AM

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“ John C. Hopkins purchased the Enchanted Cottage for the family of Col. Houston T. "Terry" Hawkins, Ret. United States Air Force (USAF).



**John C. Hopkins** - June 21 at 11:43 AM

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“ Emerald Garden Basket was purchased for the family of Col. Houston T. "Terry" Hawkins, Ret. United States Air Force (USAF).



June 21 at 09:45 AM

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“ It is with a sad heart that I offer my condolences to Martha, Heather and Holly. My prayers and blessings are with each of you. The best memory I have with Terry and Martha is when we shared a few hours together at our Martha and my home-place. They followed me home and shared a few minutes of their precious time with me. I am grateful for their lives and what they both have meant to me



**Debbie York** - June 21 at 09:34 AM

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“ Gailyn Housley lit a candle in memory of Col. Houston T. "Terry" Hawkins, Ret. United States Air Force (USAF)



**Gailyn Housley** - June 21 at 01:05 AM

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“ Jeff And Trisha lit a candle in memory of Col. Houston T. "Terry" Hawkins, Ret. United States Air Force (USAF)



**Jeff and Trisha** - June 20 at 11:13 PM

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“ Enchanted Cottage was purchased for the family of Col. Houston T. "Terry" Hawkins, Ret. United States Air Force (USAF).



June 20 at 11:09 PM

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“ Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of Col. Houston T. "Terry" Hawkins, Ret. United States Air Force (USAF).



June 20 at 07:33 PM

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“ Ocean Breeze Spray was purchased for the family of Col. Houston T. "Terry" Hawkins, Ret. United States Air Force (USAF).



June 20 at 07:32 PM

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“ Rest In Peace my dear Cousin Terry !! You were always and still are my hero ! Love you and Martha so much !

Larry Chapman - June 20 at 07:16 PM

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“ Dear Martha – Annie and I send our love and sympathies.

We first met Terry (and you) as traveling companions through the capitals of Eastern Europe. What fun we had! Any observant person could tell -- just by looking at him and listening to him -- that Terry was a man of substance . . . who led a life of substance. Always with a twinkle in his eye, he seemed in constant good humor. Terry was just one of those rare people one meets in life's journey where one concludes, through considered observation: . . . this is a wise person . . . pay attention to what he says. I certainly did.

I am fortunate to have called Terry my friend. I will miss him, as will anyone who knew him. God Bless Terry. And God Bless you and your Family. We look forward to seeing you back in New Mexico.

Michael Campbell  
Santa Fe, New Mexico

Michael Campbell - June 20 at 05:12 PM

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“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Col. Houston T. "Terry" Hawkins, Ret. United States Air Force (USAF).



June 20 at 12:41 PM

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“ RIP my dear friend, neighbor and Brother in Christ. You have fought the good fight and now you will receive the Crown promised to all believers and followers of Jesus Christ. Martha and family I am praying for you to have the peace, care and encouragement that only God can give. Love to all of you, your dad served his life well and now rest in the arms of Jesus. Reg Head

Lesley R. Head - June 20 at 09:35 AM

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“ Roger and Family,  
I am so sorry for your loss. My thoughts and prayers are with all of you at this sad time.



Patricia Holcombe - June 19 at 07:48 PM

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“ Martha, Roger and Family, Praying for His strength and blessings for each of you. Humbled and grateful for Terry's service to our country. Through the years it was always a blessing for Preacher Hawkins share life stories about "Terry and Martha".



Debbie Edwards Morehead - June 19 at 06:10 PM

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“ I will always remember my lunchtime chess games with Terry. Martha, you are in our prayers and may your memories and God's love comfort you.

Keith Campbell

Keith Campbell - June 19 at 03:55 PM

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“ Harold Alexander lit a candle in memory of Col. Houston T. "Terry" Hawkins, Ret. United States Air Force (USAF)



**Harold Alexander** - June 19 at 01:58 PM