



Mr. Raymond D. Weber

May 3, 1934 - February 20, 2025

Brigadier General Ray Weber, 90, spent the majority of his adult life in North Canton, OH before moving to South Carolina late in retirement. On February 20, 2025, Ray flew into the sunset surrounded by loving family.

Ray was born May 3, 1934 in Holmes County, OH, one of ten children, the son of Joseph Weber and Iva (Balder) Wilson. He graduated from Canal Fulton High School and went on to enjoy a distinguished career in military and civilian aviation. Ray married Judith “Judy” Denkhaus on May 7, 1960 in Canton, OH and was blessed with 65 years of marriage. Ray is survived by Judy, their two children, four grandchildren, five great grandchildren, and three of his sisters.

In 1956, Ray enlisted in the Ohio Air National Guard’s 145th Aero Medical Squadron at Akron-Canton prior to earning a commission and Navigator Wings from the Aviation Cadet Program at Harlingen Air Force Base, TX. He subsequently attended USAF Pilot Training at Moody AFB in 1962 to earn his Pilot Wings. Ray continued his loyal service to the Ohio ANG as a pilot at the 160th Refueling Group (Wilmington) and 179th Tactical Fighter Group (Mansfield), followed by promotions to Director of Operations and Commander at the 164th Airlift Squadron (Mansfield), and Director of Operations at the Ohio ANG Headquarters (Worthington). His career culminated as Chief of Staff at the Ohio ANG Headquarters where he retired in January 1990 as a

federally recognized Brigadier General with 33+ years of service. Across Ray's aviation career, he accumulated over 20,000 flight hours piloting eleven different models of aircraft.

As a career citizen-soldier, Ray was also employed at GenCorp, Inc. from 1964-2000, ultimately serving as the Chief Pilot and Director of Flight Operations with a fleet of aircraft operating from Sacramento International Airport, CA and Akron-Canton Regional Airport, OH.

In addition to his love of flying, Ray was a skilled craftsman and enjoyed spending his recreational time boating, woodworking and restoring legacy military aircraft. Ray was a proud volunteer at the MAPS Air Museum in North Canton, OH where both an F-84 and the C-130 "Spirit of Mansfield" are dedicated to him in honor of his service to our country and MAPS. Ray was a long-term member of the North Canton YMCA, Faith United Methodist Church, and the Quiet Birdmen. Throughout his life, Ray exhibited an exceptional work ethic, eye for detail, and commitment to excellence while always maintaining a positive attitude and extraordinary resilience.

Visitation will be held at Karlo-Libby Funeral Home on February 27th from 5-8pm. A private graveside service will be held at a later date with military honors.

To honor Ray's legacy, the family requests, in lieu of flowers, donations be extended to MAPS Air Museum of North Canton, OH, mapsairmuseum.org.

Previous Events

Visitation

FEB **27**. 5:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Karlo-Libby Funeral Home
5000 Everhard Rd NW
Canton
Canton, OH 44718

Tribute Wall

RP

“ This news is so sad. I worked for Ray Weber at the GenCorp Flight Department from 1985 until 1999. He demanded the best from everybody and I learned a LOT from him over the years.

One Ohio Air National Guard pilot I met, when Ray was Chief of Staff and Director of all flight operations for the OANG, asked me how I could stand working for him. I knew it was because Ray demanded the best from everyone and that person obviously had a problem with that.

One of my favorite stories was when we listened to a salesperson give his pitch and that guy didn't have a clue. The salesperson gave his spiel and sat back waiting for a response.

Ray Weber responded "I gotta say I'm very impressed."

The salesperson leaned back in his chair with a big smile on his face.

Then Ray leaned forward and said "Just not favorably."

That has become one of my favorite lines when dealing with vendors. It works.

Another was when we were buying a new jet and the factory salesperson was giving us a hard time. We wanted thrust reversers and that was a \$240,000 option on a \$6.5 million dollar purchase, around 1986.

Ray cut the salesperson off and said "Tell you what, Bob. I'll buy your airplane if you throw in the thrust reversers for free."

The salesperson started sputtering and Ray cut him off again saying "I've got another call so you think it over and call me back." and hung up.

I was aghast. I said "There's no way he'll go for that." Ray responded and said "I know that but he was being a jerk so I wanted to give him something to sweat over."

A week later the factory salesperson called back and said "You've got a deal, as long as long as we can use your airplane for the final certification flights."

The factory fit the the test flights in to our normal acceptance flights for a new airplane and we got a \$240,000 option for free. Wow. Want to score points with your company executives? That worked, and it was a complete bluff. I still shake my head at how it turned out.

That taught me that we never really know what the seller's motivations are, despite what they are saying out loud. That was a VERY valuable lesson.

Then last year he was talking about his son Mark, who had been promoted to a two-star General Officer when Ray was "only" a one-star General Officer. Ray said "Now I gotta call my son "Sir" because he outranks me!"

Ray Weber was one of the best bosses I ever had. You don't get lot of true mentors in your life but he was one of mine. I just hope I live up to his expectations.

Ray Pesek - February 22, 2025 at 07:36 PM

AB

“ *Flew with Ray in the Mansfield ANG unit and always admired his energy and capabilities. A friend and a fine man. Al Bachman*

Al Bachman - February 22, 2025 at 11:36 AM