



Harold Ben Hughes

July 23, 1935 - March 20, 2023

Harold Ben Hughes went home to reunite with his wife on the first day of spring, March 20, 2023.

Ben was born in Perry, Oklahoma on July 23, 1935, the year Amelia Earhart became the first person to fly solo from Hawaii to California and Earl and Weldon Bascom produced the first rodeo ever held outdoors under electric lights. He was the last born to Etta Adella and Robert Erle Hughes forging from a line of the original Okalahoma Sooners. Ben's mother was a school teacher. His father worked a farm that appeared in Time Magazine during the Dust Bowl era. Ben went on to college, to study at Oklahoma State University, where he met his wife Karen who played the piccolo in the college band. Both Ben and Karen were elected as the Alpha Chapter Kappa Kappa Psi Band Presidents in the mid 1950s. In 1957, He asked Karen to marry him before completing his first degree in Business and Statistics at OU. Karen once remarked that her favorite song while dating Ben was - Catch A Lucky Penny Put It In Your Pocket.

Ben was commissioned into the United States Air Force, shortly after college. Harold Ben Hughes had an accomplished career in the military focused on leadership commands computer programming and satellite contingencies, until 1978. He acquired an MBA at Michigan State University in 1968. On the week of Labor Day 1961, Ben began working with the Air Force 4 years to

help the United States reestablish itself after the rise of the Berlin Wall. Ben and Karen spent a lot of time traveling Europe and the United States with their family while Ben served our country. After his Air Force Career, Ben worked as an officer in the Fraternal Order of Foresters helping with children's play ground builds and the Make-A-Wish organization. He was selected as the Forrester programs Fraternal Southeast Regional Director. He enjoyed, as well, being an active member of Olive Baptist Church in Pensacola for many years where he and Karen established a sense of family. Ben and Karen were married for over 60 years. One of the most compelling callings of his life, Ben once said, was telling people about Jesus in a compassionate way by helping the Gideon's provide Bibles to hotel rooms and hospitals where people might have available to them Good News and hope.

Ben is survived by his children Kirk, Erle and Sheryle, his beloved Grandchildren, Jenny, Caroline, Amanda and Tabitha and his sister, Katy.

All expressions in celebration of a life will be embraced by the family as they suggest that donations be made to the Gideon's Organization.

Shelton Funeral Home is assisting the family.