

ROBERT D. WENDEL, M.D.
Lt. Colonel Retired

Bob was born in Fresno, California on March 14, 1935, to Robert C. and Gertrude Wendel of Fresno and passed away on Wednesday, August 16, 2006.

He attended Fresno grammar schools and graduated from Fresno High School in 1953. Prior to finishing his B.A. degree at Fresno State College he was recruited by IBM and offered a position in the company at Poughkeepsie, New York where he learned about the new field of computer technology. After several years he left IBM and went to work on the Atlas Missile Project in Texas. He later returned to California where he worked for a few months as a missile guidance specialist on one of the first operational computer systems at Vandenberg Air Force Base. His true lifelong passion to become a physician brought him back to Fresno State College where he completed his degree and necessary prerequisite courses to apply to medical school. At the age of 27, he was accepted into the University of California College of Physicians and Surgeons earning his M.D. Degree in 1966. He graduated from Medical School with honors, and completed his Internship in Fresno at Valley Medical Center.

FRESNO BEE
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Growing up, Bob always excelled at whatever he wanted to accomplish. At the age of 16, he became a licensed Amateur radio operator, and building much of his own communication equipment. He was superb electronic technician, loved the outdoors, snow skiing, photography, and scouting. He earned his Eagle Scout wings at age 14, one of the youngest to do so. He had an outstanding and respected military career as a flight surgeon with the Air National Guard in Fresno and won numerous medals for distinguished and heroic service. He served in the first Gulf war as a medical officer and retired from the military as a Lt. Colonel. He was a true patriot and felt proud and honored to serve his country. After his retirement from the military, he opened his private practice in Fresno specializing in occupational and rehabilitative medicine. Above all, his greatest love was his devotion to God, his family and friends.

He held membership in many professional and community organizations such as the American Medical Association, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, The American Legion, and was a thirty second degree Mason and member of the Shrine. He and his family raised champion show dogs and won many top awards in the American Kennel Club.

He was preceded in death by his first wife, Claudia Conkey Wendel; son, James Walter Wendel; and two infant grandchildren.

His survivors include his wife Terry Wendel; his son, Kerry Wendel; his daughters, Kisa Rienke and Claudia Jean Nagel; stepdaughter, Tanya Gonzales; step-sons, Corey and Andrew Simmons; and 11 grandchildren. He is also survived by his two sisters, Patricia L. Baker of Clovis and Nancy R. Austin of Upland, California, plus several nieces and nephews.

A Memorial Service will be held at the First Baptist of Clovis, 2080 Tollhouse Rd. near Armstrong Avenue on Tuesday, August 22, 2006, at 10:00 a.m.

Remembrances may be made to the American Heart Association, the First Baptist Church of Clovis, or the donor's favorite charity.

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