



Fred Artie Langford

March 27, 1941 - April 15, 2014

USAF SMSgt (Retired) Fred Artie Langford Jr. of Del Rio, Texas, passed away April 16, 2014, after a brief illness.

Born March 27, 1941, in Devine, Texas, to Fred A. and Opal (Williams) Langford, Fred A. Langford celebrated his 73rd birthday this year with his wife, children and grandchildren by his side at Baptist Medical Center in San Antonio.

As a boy he attended schools in San Antonio and Brownwood, Texas, before joining the U.S. Air Force, where he would serve with distinguished honor. A veteran, he served military tours in Korea and Vietnam, and served as superintendent of Field Training Detachment at its headquarters at Randolph Air Force Base until retiring after a 22-year career, achieving the rank of senior master sergeant.

While his military career earned him many ribbons, awards and recognitions, his most valued service after retirement was that of teaching high school students in the "Grow Your Own" program, an award-winning partnership among the U.S. Department of the Air Force, U.S. Civil Service, private industry and public education.

Mr. Langford was a beloved vocational teacher for high school seniors at Del Rio High School, who learned aircraft maintenance at nearby Laughlin AFB under his innovative tutelage for 16 years. He was a mentor to his students both in the classroom and out and was known for his contagious enthusiasm

that students said made "learning an adventure."

Indeed, in 1995 he was nominated for the Air Force Association's Christa McAuliffe Memorial Award, which recognizes a public, private, or parochial school teacher who promotes aerospace technologies through innovative curriculum in the classroom.

To his family, he will be remembered as happy, loving man with a fun sense of humor and big heart.

Mr. Langford was preceded in death by his parents and younger brother, John "Red" Langford. He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Linda Faye (Scott) Langford, his four children and their families: Kelly Langford Thompson of Abilene, Texas, and her children Elizabeth Davies, Wyatt and Beau Thompson; Michael Langford of Del Rio; Joseph Langford of Del Rio; and Laura Langford Smith, son-in-law Geoff Smith, and their children Molly and Charlie, of Franklin, Tenn. He also is survived by his loving uncle and lifelong father figure, Lonnie Gene Williams, of Brady, Texas.