



## Charles Luther Claunch Jr.

February 18, 1935 - January 29, 2026

Charles "Charlie" Claunch, 91, passed away peacefully in his sleep on Thursday, January 29 of natural causes. He was born on February 18, 1935 in Chattanooga, TN to Charles L. Claunch, Sr. and Ann Colvard Claunch. After attending high school at McCallie military academy in Chattanooga, he graduated in 1956 with a Bachelor of Science from Washington and Lee University in Lexington, VA. In 1957, Charlie joined the US Navy and became a pilot flying P2-V Neptune patrol aircraft based in the Aleutian islands. After six years of service, he resigned his commission as a Lieutenant in 1963. For a short period, he flew crop dusters in Texas and Oklahoma before being hired by American Airlines. He worked for American for 30 years, and when he retired, he was a senior captain based at DFW airport, American's main hub. While in the Navy, Charlie met his future wife Mary Louise Stewart Claunch in Dallas. They were married in 1963 and had two sons. They remained married for 55 years until Mary Louise died in 2018. Throughout his life, Charlie's enthusiasm for flying was not limited to his job. He bought and flew numerous small aircraft including aerobatic biplanes. A skilled aviator, he joined two other pilots in Nashville and started an aerobatic biplane team called the Pterodactyls which participated in several major air shows in the region. After moving to Texas, he often entertained crowds with aerobatic shows at July 4th fly-ins near Mineola.

After moving to Lindale with his wife in 1990, Charlie was a fixture at Mineola Wisener field where he kept his aircraft and made many friends among

airplane owners and enthusiasts. Upon moving to Hideaway, he made many new friends and enjoyed golf, dancing and socializing at club events. He was often generous, donating money to the Lindale Library and providing care for wife, his elderly mother-in-law and great aunt.

Charlie was predeceased by his wife Mary Louise Stewart Claunch, his parents, his brother Nathan Claunch and sister Peggy Claunch. He is survived by his sons William Claunch and wife Sally Claunch, and son Dave Claunch and wife Susan Claunch as well two grandchildren, Alex Claunch and Will Claunch, along with several nieces and nephews. Charlie did not want a funeral or memorial service, but the family asks that those wishing to honor Charlie please consider making a donation in his name to the Lindale Library (<https://www.lillierusselllibrary.org>).

# Tribute Wall

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“Charlie and I shared a lot of laughs together in the short time that I knew him. I always enjoyed his stories of when he was a pilot and the jokes he played on his passengers. I wish I had known him longer, but I am honored to have known him for the time that I did. His memories will last forever as he is definitely unforgettable. Praying for the family and friends in this difficult time.

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**Lauren Norman** - February 05 at 05:31 PM

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Charlie and I were New Hires at AA based in Nashville. He was always fun to be around, we only flew together a couple of times as our seniority numbers were very close (I was a few numbers senior) as young F/O & F/E's on the DC6/7. We hooked up again when we were both flying out of DFW the last years of our airline careers. We both had the old airplane addiction, I flew to Mineola a couple of times over the years in one of my old Waco biplane's to visit him for lunches. He was one of the really good guys. Miss ya buddy, RIP!

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**Troy Reb Stimson** - March 08 at 02:53 PM