



## Wilburn "Bill" E. Hassler

January 26, 1936 - February 3, 2023

The funeral for retired Air Force Senior Master Sergeant Wilburn Elroy "Bill" Hassler will be 2 p.m. Thursday, Feb. 9, 2023, at Anderson-Burriss Funeral Home Chapel. His grandson, the Rev. Robert Pringle, will officiate. The Rev. Terry Jewell will perform the graveside service at Memorial Park Cemetery, Enid. Burial will follow with military rites provided by the Silver Talons Honor Guard from Vance Air Force Base. Visitation with the family will be 6-7 p.m. Wednesday at the funeral home. Arrangements are by Anderson-Burriss Funeral Home and Crematory.

He was born Jan. 26, 1936, in Stockdale, Texas, to Otto and Ella Hassler, and passed away at Golden Oaks nursing home Friday, Feb. 3, 2023. He graduated from Seguin (Texas) High School in 1954 and joined the United States Air Force. After basic training, he was stationed in California before being sent to South Korea. It was there that his life changed for the better. A friend of his, also an airman stationed in Korea, had let it be known he desired letters from home. In Oklahoma, Mary Sue Rusk, a young woman in Westville, saw his plea in a church bulletin and sent a letter and photo signed "As Ever, Mary Sue." The airman received several letters and shared them with others on base, including his good friend, Airman 2nd Class Bill Hassler. Bill read Sue's letter, saw her photo with the signature and thought, "that is a nice-looking girl," so he answered her letter. They continued to correspond, sharing a lot about themselves in letters while he was in Korea. After Bill returned to the United States, he was stationed in El Paso, Texas, and the two continued

to write and would talk during pre-arranged times, he on the landlord's phone and she on the drugstore's phone. He eventually proposed, and they met face to face — despite the Hungarian Revolution and car trouble — for the first time when he traveled to Oklahoma for their wedding, Nov. 23, 1956.

The couple had four children, Rick, Kevin, Debbie and Steve. They traveled the country and the world during his time in the Air Force. They lived in El Paso, Texas; Omaha, Neb.; Bossier City, La.; Izmir and Istanbul, Turkey; Fairfield, Calif; Hawaii; and Enid, where he retired on May 31, 1975, at Vance Air Force Base, after nearly 21 years of service to his country. During his time in Hawaii, Bill traveled extensively throughout the Pacific region, including the Philippines, South Vietnam, Thailand, Hong Kong, Guam and Johnston Island. His awards received during his time in the Air Force include the Meritorious Service Medal with one oak leaf cluster, Air Force Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters, Outstanding Unit Award with one oak leaf cluster, Air Force Good Conduct Medal with three oak leaf clusters, Army Good Conduct Medal with two knots, National Defense Service Award, Air Force Longevity Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters and NCO Professional Military Education Graduate Award. After leaving the Air Force, Bill realized he needed to do something else, so he enrolled in Phillips University and pursued a bachelor's degree in education. He later earned a master's degree in education from Oklahoma State University. While going to Phillips, he worked in security at Kmart. After graduation, he worked for Enid Public Schools, then Lahoma Public Schools as an elementary school teacher and principal. He became superintendent of Lahoma Public Schools and led the district's consolidation with Ames Public Schools to create Cimarron Public Schools. After guiding the new school district for several years, Bill retired again and moved with Sue back to Enid. He then worked for Enid Public Schools again, this time driving a bus. His favorite times were spent driving special needs students to and from school, although he also drove students to out-of-town events. Bill and Sue enjoyed traveling, spending a month in Europe when their daughter and son in-law were stationed with the Air Force

in England. They also traveled to see the sights in the United States, including Yellowstone National Park and Mount Rushmore. They traveled frequently to Colorado to visit their grandsons, Bobby and Matt. Later, they welcomed two more grandsons from China, Jake and Jude, making sure they were there to greet them at the airport. Bill and Sue were members of United Church of Lahoma, where he was an elder and held many leadership positions on the board. He also was a longtime Lions Club member, receiving several awards, including Enid Briggs Evening Lions Club Lion of the Year in 1999 and Lions International Foundation Melvin Jones Fellow. He served as Oklahoma Lions Service Foundation president in 2005-06. He also enjoyed working on the club's eyeglass drives and operating the rides at Meadowlake Park. Sue preceded him in death on Oct. 7, 2016, after nearly 60 years of marriage. He missed her greatly and looked forward to the day when they would be reunited. He was the best husband, father, grandfather and great-grandfather. We know he is in Heaven, rejoicing with Jesus and enjoying being with the love of his life, Sue. We love you Bill, Dad, Grandpa and Great-Grandpa. Surviving Bill are his children, Rick Hassler and wife Donna of Enid, Kevin Hassler and wife Violet of Enid, Debra (Hassler) Pringle and husband John of Salina, Okla., and Steven Hassler and wife Doris of Enid; grandchildren, Robert Pringle and wife Klarissa of Nowata, Matthew Pringle and wife Holly of Owasso, and Jacob and Judah Hassler, both of Enid; step-grandson Stephen Hunt of Bartlesville; and great-granddaughters, Miley and Mia Deane, both of Owasso. He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Mary Sue; his parents; brothers Harold, Kermit and Kervin; and sister Mildred. Memorials may be made through the funeral home to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

# Cemetery Details

## Memorial Park Cemetery

6405 Memorial Dr  
Enid, OK 73701

# Previous Events

## Visitation with Family & Friends

FEB 8. 6:00 PM - 7:00 PM (CT)

Anderson Burriss Funeral Home & Crematory  
3002 N Van Buren  
Enid, OK 73703  
(580) 233-2700  
[ab@andersonburriss.com](mailto:ab@andersonburriss.com)  
<https://www.andersonburriss.com/>

## Funeral Service

FEB 9. 2:00 PM (CT)

Anderson-Burriss Funeral Home Chapel  
3002 N. Van Buren  
Enid, OK 73703  
<http://www.andersonburriss.com>

# Tribute Wall

AS

“ *A life well lived, I respect Mr. Hassler's life, legacy, and the things he stood for.*

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**Alex Smithley** - August 20, 2025 at 06:06 PM

AB

“ *1 file added to the tribute wall*



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**Anderson Burris** - February 09, 2023 at 04:38 PM

TK

*Mr. Hassler was my favorite teacher. I had him for my 5th grade class, back in 1982-3, at Garfield Elementary. He always would put an imaginary line around his desk, and tell all of us NOT to come to his desk when this line was around it. 🙄 I always did....and he still, always helped me with my questions, no matter if that invisible line was there or not. Rest in peace, Mr. Hassler, and many sympathies for his family.*

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**Terri Kunkel** - February 28, 2023 at 08:17 PM



“ *what a wonderful man i first met him at the blood institute He was a very dedicated blood donor He always was such a very compassionate man hugs and prayers to family*

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**Violet Brinkley** - February 07, 2023 at 05:54 PM

BD

*Bill and I were stationed together in Hawaii from '70-'73. Bill was my supervisor and mentor. Everything I earned during our time together was due to him. He was a great leader and manager and knew how to get things done, and done right the first time. I missed his camaraderie when he departed. My wife Kum Nan and I express our deepest sympathy to the Hassler Family. May Bill fly with the Angels!*

**Billy Dannewitz** - February 07, 2023 at 07:40 PM



“ *Country Basket Blooms was purchased for the family of Wilburn "Bill" E. Hassler.*



February 07, 2023 at 04:12 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of Wilburn "Bill" E. Hassler.*



February 07, 2023 at 11:42 AM



“ *Medium Dish Garden was purchased for the family of Wilburn "Bill" E. Hassler.*



February 06, 2023 at 08:44 PM



“ *Magnificent Life Spray was purchased for the family of Wilburn "Bill" E. Hassler.*



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February 05, 2023 at 07:51 PM