



## Robert Gruber

January 30, 1934 - March 4, 2012

Robert Christian Gruber (Bob), a retired U.S. Army Lieutenant Colonel, of Bryantown, MD died on March 4, 2012 at the age of 78 after a long and courageous battle with cancer. Born on January 30, 1934 to Harry and Almeda Gruber of Annville, PA, Bob was the youngest of five children.

Bob is survived by Eileen, his devoted wife of 26 years. He is also survived by three children: Christina Rodriguez of Austin, TX; Christian Gruber of Holtwood, PA, and Leo Gruber of Edinboro, PA; and three step-children: Frederick Schmidt of Raleigh, NC, Karen Schmidt of San Diego, CA, and Erik Schmidt of Rorschach, Switzerland. Bob's older sister, Jane Seiverling of Hershey, PA survives him as well.

Bob is survived by nine grandchildren: Adrian and Ian Rodriguez of Austin, TX, Philip and Joanna Gruber of Holtwood, PA; Elliott Gruber of Edinboro, PA, Electra Tropoloc and Maeve Bohlin of Santa Fe, NM, and Franziska and Benjamin Schmidt of Rorschach, Switzerland.

Bob will also be missed by his three daughters-in-law: Sharon Gruber of Holtwood, PA, Armored Gruber of Edinboro, PA, and

Alexandra Schmidt of Rorschach, Switzerland as well as many nieces and nephews.

He is preceded in death by his eldest daughter Robin and by his three eldest siblings, Christine Kreider, Frederick Gruber, and Harry Gruber.

Bob graduated from Annville High School and is an alumnus of Millersville University (BA) and Texas Tech University (MA). Bob served 20 years as an Explosive Ordnance Disposal officer in the United States Army where he was stationed at Aberdeen Proving Ground, MD, Ft. Rucker, AL, Ft. Kobbe, Panama, San Antonio, TX, Lubbock, TX, La Crosse, WI, and Indian Head, MD.

Bob served two tours of duty in Vietnam - the first in 1966 and the second in 1972 when he volunteered to return. He was honored with two Bronze Stars, a Vietnamese Service Medal, a Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm, a Vietnam Campaign Medal with five campaign stars, an Armed Forces Reserve Medal, and a Meritorious Service Medal, among other awards.

In 1967, Captain Gruber was awarded the Bronze Star Medal with "V" Device for his heroic actions at the Ammunition Supply Depot in Long Binh, Vietnam. The Depot was infiltrated by Viet Cong sappers who planted hundreds of booby traps hidden throughout the stacks of ammunition. For 12 hours, explosions ripped through the Depot, creating an inferno of exploding ordnance, flying shell fragments, and burning munitions. As officer in charge of the Explosive Ordnance Disposal Section of the Depot, Bob personally led his men in a search for delay-type devices planted by the enemy, climbing over the ammunition stacks and

disarming the booby traps until the detonations ceased. For the next 2½ months, Bob supervised the extremely delicate and dangerous mission of rendering the entire depot safe.

Another highlight of his career was providing bomb protection during Martin Luther King, Jr.'s march from Selma to Montgomery.

Upon retiring from active duty, Bob worked an additional 22 years at the Naval Explosive Ordnance Disposal Technology Division in Indian Head, MD as a federal civil service employee, retiring at the age of 73.

Bob and Eileen traveled widely, but Bob was the most content when he was at home on his hill. He was a peaceful, gentle man, even though he was a distinguished soldier who rose up through the ranks from private to Lt. Colonel during his military career. His hobbies were reading and listening to music on his porch, observing nature, and taking long walks.

A memorial mass will be held at St. Peter's Catholic Church (3320 St. Peter's Church Road, Waldorf, MD 20601) on Saturday, March 10, 2012 at 11AM. Grave side services will follow at Mt. Carmel Monastery (5678 Mt. Carmel Road, La Plata, MD 20646).

Clergy: Reverend Oliver McGready

Memorial contributions may be made to Hospice of Charles County (PO Box 1703, La Plata, MD 20646) OR Doctors Without Borders USA (PO Box 5030, Hagerstown, D 21741-5030) OR CARE (Gift

Center, PO Box 7039, Merrifield, VA 22116-2552)

# Tribute Wall



“ *Robert Gruber*

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October 08, 2023 at 10:45 PM



“ *Robert Gruber*

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October 04, 2023 at 03:12 PM