

Lt Col Judith C. “Judi” Johnson, USAF, Retired

Dates of Service: August 1968 – August 1989

We lost our beloved Judi Johnson on Friday April 12, 2019. Judi passed away unexpectedly and peacefully at the age of 72.

Judi was born on December 23, 1946 in Milwaukee, WI to parents Harold and Frieda Goll. She attended Christ Memorial Lutheran School and graduated from Milwaukee Lutheran High School in 1964. Judi graduated from the University of Wisconsin, Stevens Point in June 1968 with a BS in Dietetics and entered the Air Force. She then went on to the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, where she completed her dietetic internship and RD in July 1969 after which she began her first assignment at March Air Force Base, California. Her military career took her to Elmendorf AFB in Alaska, Carswell AFB in Texas, Travis AFB in California, Sheppard AFB in Texas, and Scott AFB in Illinois. Judi received her MA in Human Resource Management from Pepperdine University, Los Angeles in May 1981.



Lieutenant Colonel Johnson excelled in everything she did and graduated from Air Command and Staff College as well as Air War College. She served her country in the United States Air Force for 21 years and was a proud American who always sought to “Aim High” as indicated on her license plate.

After retiring from the Air Force in August 1989 Judi spent 5 years being a stay at home mom with her two daughters. She then re-entered the workforce in 1994 as an Instructor and then Assistant Professor for the Coordinated Program in Dietetics at Mount Mary University, Milwaukee, WI. Judi loved working with her students and found tremendous joy in the day-to-day teaching, learning, and mentoring. Her passion and energy influenced her students and staff as well as everyone she came in contact with. She spent 18 years at Mount Mary and retired in 2012 to spend time with her family.

Despite retiring, Judi remained an avid member of the American Dietetic Association (ADA). She was honored this year for 50 years of service and has held Director at Large positions with the Wisconsin Chapter as well as served as President of the Milwaukee Dietetic Association from 2008-2009.

Judi developed a passion for horses while she was at the University of Michigan. She worked at a stable with a registered quarter horse, Billy. A few months after Judi moved to California on her first military assignment, the stable owner drove from Michigan and surprised her, bringing Billy as a gift. Billy was then part of the family for the majority of Judi’s Air Force career. Billy even traveled up the Alcan Highway on the way to Alaska. Judi always had dogs at home and cherished time with her beloved pugs, Charley and Shyla, who have been part of the family for the past 13 years, greeting her with unconditional love.

Everyone that knew Judi could tell she loved life. She was always smiling (often for no reason) and singing. Judi put her family first and would do anything for them. She had just finished a family vacation in Florida where she was able to spoil her granddaughters and share some wonderful memories in the sun with those that were her pride and joy. Judi loved The Lord and lived life to the fullest with her unshakeable faith.

Judi is survived by her husband of 48 years, Air Force Major Dave Johnson. Judi and Dave met during their first Air Force assignment at March Air Force Base in southern California and enjoyed many wonderful experiences traveling the world together. They are blessed with two caring daughters, Lori (Andy) Giorgi (nee Johnson) of Delafield, WI and Tami Johnson of Salt Lake City, UT. Judi was an enthusiastic grandmother who loved spending time “being a kid” with her granddaughters, Eden and Colbie Giorgi of Delafield. Judi is also survived by her mother, Frieda Goll of Brown Deer, WI and was preceded in death by her father, Harold Goll.

Excerpt from 50 Years of Air Force Dietetics 1949 - 1999 book

Judith C. (Goll) Johnson

Lieutenant Colonel, USAF, Retired

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Highest Military Decoration: Meritorious Service: with 3 Oak Leaf

Clusters Memorable Military Experiences/Assignments:

USAF Regional Hospital March, March AFH, CA 1969-1972

- Initial impression-black sky-not due to the time of day or clouds but due to heavy smog, which blew in from L.A. When the smog blew out of our valley the golden hills were beautiful.
- Annually hopped a flight to Hawaii out of Norton, El Toro, or March. Price was right (we paid nothing back then) but in-flight luxuries were nonexistent. Honeymoon flight aboard a KC 135 was very long with no conventional lavatory onboard, no air conditioning and the only leg room was on top of spare aircraft tires being hauled. Each flight was an experience to be fondly remembered.
- Had an assignment to Clark AFB, PI out of March. My sponsor, Major Don Simon, said he would meet me at the flight line with a band-He did but I never arrived. Assignment was unexpectedly canceled but Major Simon did not get the word.
- Operation Homecoming-receiving our POWs from Vietnam at March AFB was a never to be forgotten experience. Our job was to feed and interview them regarding their diet during captivity. Nutritional analysis of "sewer greens" was not as accurate as I would have liked.

USAF Hospital Elmendorf, Elmendorf AFB, AK 1972-1975

- Watching moose graze on the hospital lawn from the dining room was a unique Alaskan experience.
- Finding a huge salmon in the pot and pan sink was a shock! A young airman had no place else to put his catch of the day.
- Not to be forgotten was the support of my OIC's Lt Colonel Lavada Esters and later Major Barbara Whaley and MSGts Smith and Swenson when it came to exercising my horse on those very short winter days. All agreed I should come in at 0600 so I could leave before it got dark at 1530. Famous words from the NCOs-you better ride today Ma'am, it may be colder tomorrow.

Carswell USAF Regional Hospital, Carswell AFB, TX 1975-1978

- First opportunity to design a replacement cafeteria line and see it in place during my tenure.
- Learned to talk faster than ever as my boss frequently allowed me two minutes for what I expected would be a 20-minute meeting. He was fondly known as "The Electric Chicken."
- Weight reduction by behavior modification program here was a success-a great experience.

David Grant USAF Medical Center, Travis AFB, CA 1978-1982

- Who could forget the fresh homemade bread, fruit and cheese days begun by one of my predecessors?!
- Long duty days, extreme staffing shortages and very sick patients were well balanced by a great NMS team and support from SG and SGA. We did do more with less.

Sheppard USAF Regional Hospital, Sheppard AFB, TX 1982-1985

- Planned and served a weekend dinner for the US. Air Force and NATO Air Force Surgeons General during their visit to Sheppard. What an opportunity!
- Saw two outstanding superintendents, NMS (Emmons and Tasby) promoted to E-9 while assigned to this facility.
- Great place to be assigned to see old friends. School of Health Care Sciences brought in many for professional meetings.

USAF Medical Center Scott, Scott AFB, IL 1985-1989

- Designed and received funding of stained glass overlay window depicting the history of Aeromedical Evacuation.
- Involvement with the redesign of in-flight meals to replace high fat cold meals with heart healthy hot meals was great fun; redesign of the C-9 galley was a challenge.