



## MSGT Gary Curtis Welch

September 25, 1945 - April 16, 2023

Master Sergeant Gary Curtis Welch, born on September 25th, 1945, left this world on April 16th, 2023, at the age of 77 surrounded by his loving family in Round Rock, Texas. Born in Hopewell, Virginia, Gary was a man of many achievements, but above all, he was a devoted husband, father, and grandfather.

Gary served his country for 21 years in the United States Air Force as an F-15 Aircraft Repair Technician, earning several medals and awards, including the National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal with two bronze stars, Air Force Commendation Medal, Air Force Good Conduct Medal with one silver star, and Air Force Outstanding Unit Award. His dedication to serving his country was surpassed only by his love for his family and the good he could do in the world. Above all, he was a devoted husband, father, and grandfather. He is survived by his wife, Prakong Welch, who stood by his side for more than four decades, his daughter Path Welch, his son Patrick Welch, daughter-in-law Rachel Welch, and his only grandson, Stephen Welch.

Gary's incredible journey started when he met his soulmate Prakong Kotsombat, and her daughter, Path, whom he adopted at the age of 3 while serving in Vietnam and stationed in Thailand. Gary and Prakong fell in love and married in a beautiful Thai ceremony in Yasothon, Thailand, on June 27th, 1975, and soof after welcomed their son, Patrick, on April 1st back in

Hampton, Virginia in '76. Patrick was the delight of his life, never missing out on any of his sports leagues, boy scouts, and high school football games growing up always proud and supportive. He loved being a father. Moreover, Gary and his family were set to deploy to Okinawa in 1980, but a tragic accident his wife had delayed their orders but they eventually were stationed to McChord AFB in Tacoma, Washington in 1982. Washington was full of weekend camping, fishing, adventures, and little league events with his family on off days. It was a memorable time. Then Gary retired from the military in 1986 and spent the next decades working in civil service and automobile repair companies.

In 2008, Gary and Prakong retired fully back in Yasothon, Thailand where they were married, and dedicated their time to charitable causes through their Buddhist practice with Soka Gakkai International (SGI). They built and donated a 2000 sq ft facility to host Buddhist meetings and help others through their practice. Gary also volunteered at the local primary school, teaching English several days a week with his now deceased, sister-in-law Lamyong Kotsombat. His daughter, Path, came and joined them in 2010, and together they created cherished memories while teaching English to children and adults. Gary also supported Path in opening an English Tutoring center that provided English lessons and computer classes. They named it the 'Path to Language School.'

He was dedicated to family, and his love for them made him whole. He was also the second eldest of seven siblings, and while he was the first to pass, he leaves behind a legacy of kindness and generosity that will endure through his siblings, Dolores Welch Ray, Sarah Welch Kunerth, Sandra M. Welch, Betty Welch Shultz, Samuel J. Welch, and Roberta Welch Porter.

Gary's last years were spent in Texas, closer to his family. He was suddenly taken by stage 4 colon cancer, but he never lost his fight or his love for life. He

enjoyed singing karaoke, watching NASCAR, NFL football, and spending time with his family while continuing to practice his buddhist faith everyday with his wife who was the encouragement of his life. He was adored and loved by many across the world, and his passing is a loss that will be felt by all who knew him.

Gary will be cremated, a Tribute service and followed by a celebration of life event at the Freight Shed in Yorktown, Virginia from 3pm-9pm on Friday, May 12th, 2023. His family invites all who knew him to come together to dine, wine, share stories, celebrate his life, and honor his legacy. Funeral services with military honors are scheduled for 2pm Saturday, May 13th, 2023, at Rocky Run United Methodist Church in Dewitt, Virginia.

His passing is a reminder that the world needs more people like Gary, who dedicate their lives to serving others and spreading love and kindness wherever they go without wanting praise or recognition. His legacy will continue to inspire others to be better and to do better, and his memory will forever be etched in our hearts. Rest in peace, Gary, and know that your family will continue to shine your light onto the world until they see you again.

Thank you for your service.

# Previous Events

## Celebration of Life

MAY 12. 3:00 PM - 9:00 PM (ET)

Freight Shed  
Riverwalk Landing  
Yorktown, VA  
<https://www.visityorktown.org/240/Freight-Shed>

## Memorial Service

MAY 13. 2:00 PM (ET)

Rocky Run United Methodist Church  
14925 Glebe Rd  
Dewitt, VA 23840

# Tribute Wall



“ *MSGT Gary Curtis Welch*

October 05, 2023 at 10:58 AM



“ *MSGT Gary Curtis Welch*

October 04, 2023 at 06:25 PM



“ *MSGT Gary Curtis Welch*

September 26, 2023 at 10:57 PM



“ *Simply Elegant Spathiphyllum was purchased for the family of MSGT Gary Curtis Welch.*



May 09, 2023 at 08:08 PM



“ *Strength & Solace Spray was purchased for the family of MSGT Gary Curtis Welch.*



May 07, 2023 at 05:35 AM



“ *Sweetest Sunrise Bouquet was purchased for the family of MSGT Gary Curtis Welch.*



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April 25, 2023 at 11:18 AM



“ *You'll be missed uncle  
Thanks for everything  
Eye*

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**EYe** - April 23, 2023 at 11:43 AM



“ *Eye Sineenard purchased the Arrive in Style for the family of MSGT Gary Curtis Welch.*



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**Eye Sineenard** - April 23, 2023 at 11:40 AM



“ *Will miss you so much. Wish you could be with Fred and I now surrounded by this Airport in Suffolk and seeing the small planes and Military helicopters training. But I know you are at peace now. Rest until we see each other again. Love you. Betty Shultz and Fred Ekstrom.*

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**Betty Shultz** - April 20, 2023 at 11:08 AM

BE

*Garry, I know you are in heaven smiling on your Family and all those who cared for you so much. You were a great Friend and in high school you were my best friend. Boy we could really dance together good. Such good memories and you were like a brother to me. Rest in Peace my Friend. Till we meet again.*

**Brenda Wallace Ellingsworth** - April 22, 2023 at 12:07 AM

DR

*My heart is broken.*

**Dolores Welch Ray** - April 22, 2023 at 07:44 AM



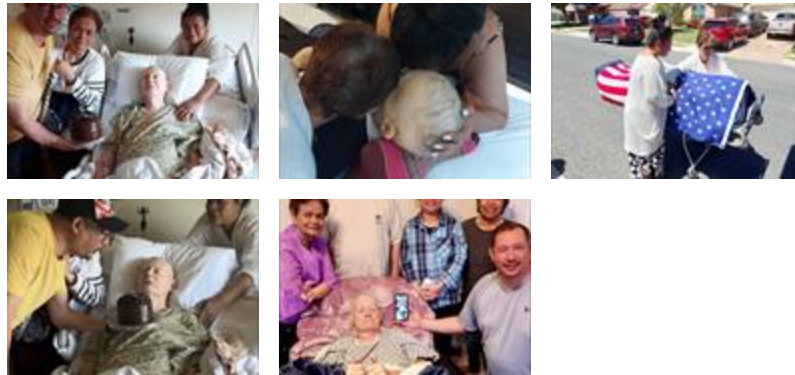
“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



**Path Welch** - April 19, 2023 at 01:27 PM



“ 6 files added to the album *The Journey*



**Path Welch** - April 19, 2023 at 01:24 PM