



## Mr Alan Elwood Shoemaker

April 5, 1952 - March 11, 2022

Alan passed away on Friday, March 11, 2022 at his home in Lillian, Alabama during his sleep.

According to Alan's wishes, the body will be cremated. Full military rites will be held at Alabama State Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Spanish Fort at 11:00 a.m. on his 70th birthday, April 5, 2022. In Alan's memory donations may be made to St. Jude, 501 St. Jude Place, Memphis, TN 38105 or Samaritan's Purse, PO. Box 3000, Boone, NC 28607 (Ukraine crisis).

Alan was born April 5, 1952 in Effingham, IL to Medford M. and Dorothy D. Shoemaker. He was baptized in the Winterrowd Christian Church at 11 years old. He graduated from Dieterich High School in 1970 and enlisted in the U.S. Marines Oct. 4, 1970. After attending basic training in San Diego, CA, he was appointed to Private First Class Jan 1, 1971. He went to Memphis, TN for helicopter training in Feb. and was appointed to Lance Corporal July 1, 1971. After a brief station in Jacksonville, NC fall of 1971, he went on to Okinawa, Japan in Jan. 1972 for 3 months, at sea in the Western Pacific with the Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 164 aboard ships of the 7th Fleet, then on to Vietnam around DaNang, and up and down the coast close to the DMZ; Quang Tri, Hue. He was appointed to the rank of Corporal May 1, 1972. One of his narrow escapes happened after dropping off South Vietnamese in enemy territory. He dropped to the floor of the helicopter only to see where bullets had crisscrossed where he had been standing moments before. Alan was awarded the Air Medal of Meritorious Achievement in Aerial Flight from

May 13th to July 11th, 1972.

Alan received the Navy Commendation Medal for heroic achievement in connection with the combat operations against the enemy in the Republic of Vietnam. On July 11, 1972 Corporal Shoemaker was the Crew Chief aboard a CH-46 helicopter which launched from the USS Okinawa on a mission to insert Vietnamese Marines into a heavily defended enemy sector northeast of Quang Tri City. As his helicopter was approaching the hostile zone at low altitude and high speed to evade SA-7 missiles, it came under intense enemy small arms and automatic weapons fire. Remaining calm, he directed rapid suppressive fire on hostile positions and assisted in guiding his aircraft into the fire-swept zone. He provided covering fire and kept his pilot informed while the Vietnamese Marines were debarking. As his helicopter was departing the hostile zone, it came under a heavy volume of fire and sustained severe damage to the hydraulic system. Reacting instantly, Corporal Shoemaker initiated emergency procedures, notifying the pilot and providing a steady flow of flight information which enabled the pilot to maneuver the crippled aircraft back to friendly territory and land safely aboard the ship.

In Dec. 1972 he went back to Okinawa where he obtained his Scuba Diving License. He returned to Norfolk, VA in Feb. 1973. There he married Teri Nichols in June 1975. He was discharged Nov. 29, 1976 and moved back to IL.

He worked as a mechanic at Heitman's Garage, then for the Village of Dieterich. Later he was in partnership with his brother, Dennis, at a service station in Dieterich. In 1981 he moved his family to Alabama. He worked at several jobs there including NAS Pensacola as a production controller, plus serving in the National Guard. From 1987 to 1991 Alan attended apprentice school for Machinist. He was good at this job also.

Alan is survived by 3 sons, Nicholas, Jeffery and Michael; twin

granddaughters, Kyya and Skyla; former wife, Teri Shoemaker; special friend, Tami Walker (all of Alabama); brother, Dennis (Carolyn) Shoemaker of Buchanan, TN; sister, Linda Packer of Effingham, IL and several nieces and nephews. He was preceded in death by his grandparents, parents and infant brother Harold Wayne.

# Previous Events

## **Military Memorial Inurnment**

APR 5. 11:00 AM (CT)

Alabama State Veterans Memorial Cemetery  
34904 State Highway 225  
Spanish Fort, AL 36527

# Tribute Wall



“ 1 file added to the tribute wall



Teri Shoemaker - March 24, 2025 at 01:16 PM



“ Mr Alan Elwood Shoemaker

October 04, 2023 at 01:12 PM



“ Mr Alan Elwood Shoemaker

November 08, 2022 at 06:34 PM



“ Jerry & Sue Richardson lit a candle in memory of Mr Alan Elwood Shoemaker



Jerry & Sue Richardson - March 30, 2022 at 03:34 AM

CC

“ Allen (willie) and I served together USMC at mard nas norfolk HMM 774 H 46 Helos. Willie was a good friend and I will miss him often. I have many stories, but I will keep them to myself and Willie. I loved the man. His heart was good. Simper Fi Marine ( Soup Sandwich) Per Sgt Maj Bob Bowman. Chris Conrad 920 655 2370

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**Chris Conrad** - March 23, 2022 at 03:51 PM

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💖👋 Hey Ya'll 💖

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**TERI SHOEMAKER** - September 22, 2025 at 08:17 PM