



James William Reonas, Jr.

August 6, 1946 - June 24, 2017

James W. Reonas, Jr., departed this world June 24, 2017, at age 70. Born August 6, 1946, in Cleveland, Miss., the second son of James W. Reonas, Sr., and Katie Mae Green Reonas, he was raised in Armuchee, Ga., outside Rome, with his two brothers, Ronald, the eldest, and Douglas, the youngest. He graduated in 1965 from Armuchee High School, where he was an all-sport star in football, basketball, baseball, and track and field. He joined the U.S. Army in 1966, graduated from Officer Candidate School at Ft. Benning in Columbus in 1967, and spent tours in South Korea with the 2nd Infantry Division along the DMZ and in 1969-70 in South Vietnam with the 199th Light Infantry Brigade and 25th Infantry Division. As a captain with the 199th LIB, he commanded "A" Company, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Infantry ("The Old Guard") in the field for about six months. He later earned his "jump wings" (parachutist certification) at Ft. Benning before leaving the Army in 1972. He joined the Clayton County Police Department as a patrolman that year and spent the next 33 years with that organization before retiring as a major. He served with the motorcycle patrol and with undercover narcotics early in his career and later commanded various watches and divisions within the department. Moreover, he was always interested in the department's special units. He was intimately involved in the development of the department's SWAT team in the late 1970s and commanded that unit for many years; on one emergency call-out in February 1991, he was grievously wounded by gunshot. At the time of the shooting, he was studying for his pilot's license, having taken an interest in

the department's helicopter aviation unit. He continued to fly after his recovery, call-sign "Falcon." He also became a certified bomb technician, adding one other badge of accomplishment and recognition to an already full uniform. In 1985, he was selected to attend and then graduated from the FBI National Academy at Quantico, Va., an honor which he held in high esteem. In July 1969, shortly before his deployment to Vietnam, he married Sandra May McMichael and they have lived through all of life's ups-and-downs in the many decades since. They have two sons together, James Matthew Reonas and Nicholas Blake Reonas. He loved to deer hunt from an early age and also was very fond of bird hunting, later in life developing a great passion for wild turkey. He loved dogs, poker, old westerns and war movies, and police and crime dramas. He called girls' high school softball as an umpire for some years as well as part of his lifelong interest in sports, also being a Georgia Bulldogs fan through and through. Gone before him are his father, mother, eldest brother Ron and sister-in-law Kaye, and many other close relatives and friends. He is survived by his caring wife, two sons, daughter-in-law Barbara, grandchildren Madeleine and Will Reonas, younger brother Doug Reonas (Diane), nephew David Reonas, niece Desirie Keith, and many loving cousins and in-laws. Funeral services will be held at 3 PM, Wednesday, June 28, 2017 in the Chapel of Ford-Stewart Funeral Home. The family will receive friends from 12-3 PM, the day of the service.