

MOREL, WILLIAM E. III LT. COL.

THE HARTFORD COURANT

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MOREL, William E. III Lt. Col.

Lieutenant Colonel William E. Morel, III went to be with our Lord on (Oct. 21, 1998). He was the acting Commander for the 366th Operations Support Squadron, and a Command Pilot in the F-15E Strike Eagle assigned to the 366th Wing at Mountain Home AFB, Idaho. He was on a routine nighttime training mission when his plane crashed in the southeast corner of Oregon. William was born to William E. Morel, Jr. and Emily F. (Jacques) Morel in **Hartford**, May 15, 1956. He attended Conard High School in **West Hartford**. He enlisted in the Air Force as an Air Traffic Controller in August of 1974, working his way up to the rank of Staff Sergeant. He earned a Bachelor's degree in Business Administration, Aeronautical and Aviation Management from Embry Riddle Aeronautical University while in the service. He was selected for Officer's Training School, and was commissioned in December 1979. He served his country for over 24 years. Willy was a highly respected and distinguished officer and outstanding military aviator. He was acting commander of the 366th Operations Support Squadron, Mountain Home AFB, Idaho, and attached to the 391st "Bold Tigers" F-15E Fighter Squadron for flying duties. Prior to graduation from the Fighter Training Unit's 333rd "Fighting Eagles" in February of this year, Lt. Col. Morel attended the Marine Corps War College, Quantico, VA. His aggressive staff work at HQ USAF Plans and Operations at the Pentagon from 1993-1995 helped to enable the current Air Expeditionary Wing concept at Mountain Home AFB. As Air Liaison Officer in Charge, 17th Aviation Brigade, Republic of Korea, during 1992 and 1993, Willy coordinated a superb joint force that ensured the continued freedom of South Korea. As an F-111 Fighter Weapons School instructor and Operational Test and Evaluation pilot, he was a driving force behind our current Air Combat Command precision guided weapon capabilities. These assignments showed his expertise as a fighter pilot and military leader. He began his 24-year career as an airman air traffic controller, and worked his way through the ranks with service to comrades and improving combat capabilities as his primary goals. Lt. Col. Morel's awards and decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal with four Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Force Commendation Medal with two Oak Leaf Clusters, Air Force Outstanding Unit Award with three devices, Combat Readiness Medal with two devices, Small Arms Expert Ribbon, NCO Professional Military Education Ribbon, Air Force Good Conduct Medal, Air Force Longevity Service Award with five devices, National Defense Service Medal, Air Force Overseas Long Tour Ribbon, Air Force Overseas Short Tour Ribbon, and the Air Force Training Ribbon with device. Willy had a love for the outdoors which included hunting and fishing. He was a compassionate and loving husband and father who adored his children.

"Skunk" will be truly missed by us all. He married Dana Fisk of California in Stanley, ID on Sept. 3, 1998. William is survived by his loving wife, Dana; his mother, Emily F. Morel of Holly Hills, FL; his daughter, Jessica 15; son, Colin 14; and their mother, Sharon; his brother, Eric; and sister, Theresa and their families, all of Connecticut. He is also survived by his father, William E. Morel Jr. and step-mother, Rose Morel; and half-sister, Nichole DiBacco of Panama City, FL. He also leaves behind his best friend and cousin, Wayne Sirois; and many other relatives, very close friends and comrades. William will be remembered for his wise and steadfast leadership, his loving devotion to his family, and his friendly, easy-going manner. Everyone he met looked up to him as distinguished aviator, an outstanding role model, and a good friend. We will remember him always for the enormous contributions and sacrifices he gave to the Mountain Home Air Force Base "Gunfighters", the Air Force, and his country. God speed. Funeral services, with military honors and a flyover, will be Tuesday, Nov. 3, 10 a.m. at Saint Mark's Evangelist Church, Quaker Lane South, West Hartford. Memorial donations can be made to the Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind, Inc.

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