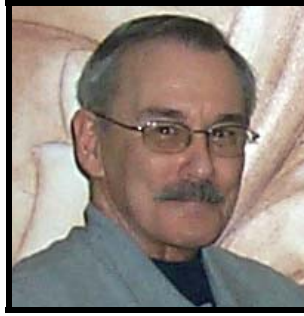


## MY OBITUARY



by David L. (Dutch) Helms

DAVID L. HELMS, \_\_\_\_, passed away on \_\_\_\_, 20\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_, from complications of recurrent laryngeal cancer. Dave (also known as "Dutch" to many of his friends) was born September 19, 1943 in Cleveland, Ohio, the youngest of two sons of Alfred Herbert Helms and Margaret Isbel Helms (NEE: Hepplewhite). Raised in Berea, he graduated from Berea High School in 1961 and received his Bachelor's Degree in German and History from Heidelberg College, Tiffin, OH in 1965. He pursued additional studies at the University of Heidelberg, Germany, Ohio University, and Oklahoma University, and received his Masters Degree in National Security Affairs from the Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey CA in 1977. He joined the USAF in February, 1967. Commissioned in April 1967, he completed Undergraduate Pilot Training at Reese AFB, TX in June 1968. Assigned first to the 45th Tactical Fighter Squadron, MacDill AFB, FL (F4-E), he later volunteered for Forward Air Control (O-2A), eventually flying 339 combat missions in South Vietnam in support of the 101st Airborne Division during 1969-1970. From 1970 to 1972, he flew as a T-37 instructor pilot and flight examiner at the US/German pilot training program at Sheppard AFB, Texas. From 1972 to 1975 he served as an instructor pilot, academic instructor, and chief of academics at the USAF Pilot Instructor Training Wing at Randolph AFB, Texas. Following a year as HQ Squadron Commander, 3750th Consolidated Maintenance Wing, Sheppard AFB, Texas, he was selected for Master's Degree studies at Naval Postgraduate School in June, 1976. Upon completing Defense Intelligence School, Washington, DC in 1977, he served as Assistant Air Attaché at our Embassy in Bonn, Germany from January, 1978 through May, 1980. Following another year of flight instructor duty at Columbus AFB, MS (T-38), he was then assigned to the Pentagon as an action officer for the Strategic Forces and Strategic Plans and Policy Divisions of the Joint Staff. In 1983 he volunteered for assignment as Special Assistant to the German Deputy SACEUR at HQ SHAPE (NATO) in Belgium. In 1984 he returned for a second tour of duty within the Defense Attaché Office in Bonn and then became Chief of the Air Force Section, Office of Defense Cooperation (ODC), Bonn, in July 1985. Retiring from the active duty USAF in July 1988 as a Lieutenant Colonel, he joined the Federal Civil Service and relocated to Dayton, Ohio. There, at Wright-Patterson AFB, he served as County Manager for German Foreign Military Sales Programs at the International Logistics Center from February, 1989 until transferring back to Germany in February 1991, where he was assigned as an Armaments Cooperation Specialist, again within the ODC in Bonn. In October 1992, he was promoted to Deputy Chief/ODC and appointed the Armaments Cooperation Manager. In early 1994 he was medically released from federal service after contracting laryngeal cancer and subsequently losing his vocal cords. Following his recovery from cancer, he renewed his interest in military miniature collecting, developed his computer skills and then built, founded and became the webmaster for the WebWhispers Nu-Voice Club, the largest Internet-based laryngectomy/larynx support group in the world. Dave had over 2,300 flying hours in fighter-type aircraft and was a graduate of the USAF's Squadron Officers School and the Air Command and Staff College. His military awards included two Distinguished Flying Crosses, the Bronze Star with V, three Defense Meritorious Service Medals, the Meritorious Service Medal, ten Air Medals, the Army Commendation Medal, two Air Force Commendation Medals, the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm and Silver Star and others. Additional honors and activities included honorary pilot wings from the German Air Force; selection as an Air Force Association Officer of the Year; adjunct faculty member: University of Maryland's European Division; Chairman: American Embassy Association and the American Embassy Club and Recreation Center; Secretary: American-German Business Club; PRESIDENT: Bonn American High School Booster Club; Asst. Football Coach, Bonn American High School; Heidelberg College Fellow; Member: International Association of Laryngectomees; and Member Charles Anderson Masonic Lodge, the Houston Scottish Rite, and the Maskat Shrine. Dave also valued his memberships in the Air Force Association, Military Officers Association of America, Vietnam Veterans, Veterans of Foreign Wars, National Rifle Association, and SPEBSQSA. He is survived by his daughter, Karen Marie Smolinski, of Eules, Texas. The interment ceremony will be held at Sunset Memorial Park, 6365 Columbia Rd., North Olmstead, OH with Masonic Rites and military honors. A memorial service will be held on \_\_\_\_\_ at \_\_\_\_\_. Contributions in lieu of flowers may be made either to the Heidelberg College General Scholarship Fund, Heidelberg College, Tiffin Ohio 44883, or to the WebWhispers Nu-Voice Club, c/o Treasurer, 6115 North Park Drive, Indianapolis, IN 466220

**A Tribute to a Very Special Person**  
**Lt. Col. David L. (Dutch) Helms**  
**September 19, 1943 – November 1, 2006**

My wife Sally and I were fortunate to be able to attend the recent Interment and ‘Service of Remembrance’ for Dutch Helms that took place in the Cleveland suburbs, where he was born and raised. Dutch had pre-planned this occasion, making it relatively easy for his executors and family to carry out his wishes. The location was superb. All the events took place within 10 minutes of the airport, the Interstate, and each other. Each event occurred right on time and with almost the same precision that was demonstrated by the Air Force Honor Guard, that day. We met Dutch’s longtime family Pastor, some of his relatives, and many of his childhood buddies and friends. I learned even more about the man than I had already known. It was as if I got to know another person . . . this David or Dave fellow, that his hometown friends and relatives all referred to him as. I had always referred to him as Dutch. After being around these folks that day, I am amazed by how easily and naturally I have come to know him as David or Dave; so much so in fact, that for the remainder of this message, that’s how I will be referring to him.

We had the pleasure of meeting Pamm and Mike Muzsly that day. Mike, a lifelong friend of Dave’s, and his wife Pamm, are the couple who took care of Dave in his times of need. They brought Dave into their home to live with them and take care of him, during his recovery and rehabilitation from his laryngectomy in 1994. They once again opened their doors and their hearts to Dave, when he had his recurrence. This time, they brought him home to live with them, when he was no longer able to fend for himself. They adjusted their schedules and routines to be able to give Dave the “around the clock” care and attention required, until his quiet and peaceful passing in their loving environment. They shared their home and their life with Dave, making him a part of their family. Thank you Pamm and Mike for everything you have done for this wonderful man. You are very special people.

The blanks in the obituary written by David L. (Dutch) Helms can now be filled in:

**DAVID L. HELMS, 63, passed away on NOVEMBER 1, 2006, in Seabrook, TX.**  
**and**

**A memorial service will be held on November 18th at St. Paul Lutheran Church.**

Dave wrote this obituary sometime this past summer at a point in time when he realized his life here on Earth would soon be ending. This obituary has had a profound effect on me. I learned even more about him than I had learned during that weekend we spent in the Cleveland area. As I read this obituary, I thought to myself that he had led two lives. I quickly realized that most laryngectomees, including myself, would appear to have led two lives -- the first one being prior to having the laryngectomy and the second one, after the surgery. It became obvious to me while reading, and re-reading David's Obituary, that the earlier times and people in his life were always and still very important and dear to him.

Reading this personal obituary will no doubt produce one more lasting way that David will have influenced me personally, and helped to guide my own actions. I plan in the very near future to begin writing my personal obituary. I will add to it periodically. By following David’s lead, I will also strive to make it as easy as possible for those left behind, when that time arrives for me.

In closing I would like to leave you with a thought that came to me after reading David’s obituary. That thought is: All of the great work David (Dutch) Helms did with and for laryngectomees around the world was “Icing on the Cake” of a wonderful and productive life.

*---Herb Simon*