



Max Allen Simmons

July 26, 1941 - July 21, 2023

Max Allen Simmons, 81, died peacefully at the Dozier Big Bend Hospice House in Tallahassee, Florida on July 21, 2023, just five days before his 82nd birthday.

Max was born in Port Arthur, Texas on July 26, 1941, to Clyde Simmons and Marietta Youngblood Simmons.

Max decided at a very young age that he wanted to see the world. He joined the Navy, enlisting as a medic at the San Diego Naval Base. He worked as an EMT while in college. He married Jeannie Frost of San Diego, and they had two children, Cheryl and Michael Simmons. After several years, Jeannie and Max divorced. Max moved to Mexico City where he met his second wife Mara on an airplane. She heard a voice inside her say, "this is the man for you". Six weeks later, they were married. They were married two months shy of their fiftieth wedding anniversary. They had two children, Brandon and Ashley.

Max spent his career as an international cargo airline consultant providing logistical and operational support for the U.S. military and Joint Special Operations Command. He grew to be a leader in the industry and was very loyal to his profession and to every

individual operation.

Max' job fulfilled his adventurous spirit: His adventures included transporting white rhinoceroses from South Africa to Montana; flying thoroughbred racehorses from the Kentucky Derby to Belmont Park in New York; shipping cattle from all over the world to Iran for the Shah of Iran; organizing thousands of pilgrims during their Hajj to Mecca; having a special sling made to keep Shamu, a white killer whale, wet during her flight from Florida to the west coast; flying airplanes filled with dynamite as cargo to Latin America; delivering foreign currency printed in the U.S. Mint to its destination; flying jet fighter planes with their wings detached inside a 747 under radio silence to a landing site in Chile. During the conflict over the Falkland Island between Argentina and the United Kingdom. He helped rescue Texaco employees and embassy personnel in Libya as his airplane came under gunfire. He lived in many different places including Mexico, Puerto Rico, Germany, Kenya, and Malta, to name a few. He moved his family to several locations including West Germany.

Max also showed his bravery at home, where he served as a volunteer firefighter. He loved to listen to the police scanner and was often the first to respond to an accident. On one occasion after his retirement, he was at home listening to the police scanner and heard a call about a fire nearby. Max was the first to arrive at the scene, broke down the door of the burning house, and rescued a paraplegic man who had been sleeping by carrying him out to safety. The next day, Max brought the man a smoke detector and installed it in his home.

Max leaves a legacy of doing "the right thing" no matter the obstacles. He was a champion of the underdog and treated everyone with respect and honesty. He was once flying in Central America and noticed that the airport crew did not have shoes. On his next trip to the U.S., Max personally bought the entire

crew steel toed boots to make sure they were safe. Max prided himself on evolving politically and went from red to blue to canvas for President Obama. When his grandson was born in Sweden to his Swedish daughter in-law and his son, Max, his wife, and their daughter spent some time in Sweden. He decided that Sweden was a political role model in providing quality of life for its citizens. From then on, he became outspoken about politics.

Max's motto was "family first." He loved his family dearly and would drop everything to help when needed. Max welcomed his mother-in-law, who lived with Max and his family for 23 years. He and his wife, Mara, also opened their home to friends, cousins, nieces, and nephews from Costa Rica, Mexico, Ecuador, and Argentina to live with them at various times. Max treated them all like sons and daughters. They recall the stories of him taking them camping and fishing in Valle Bravo, Mexico, teaching them how to ride his motorcycle in Texas, and caring for each of them. Max and Brandon had the finest memories camping at Big Bend National Park, crossing the Rio Grande River, camping, hunting, and driving with the rest of the family from Arkansas to Mexico City and RVing in Europe on family vacations. He also shared a passion for fly fishing with Brandon, traveling around Costa Rica and Mexico and collecting antiques and antique woodworking tools.

Max is preceded in death by his parents, Clyde Allen Simmons and Marietta Youngblood Simmons and his sister Mary Faye Landry (Kenneth James, deceased). He is survived by his adoring wife Mara A. Simmons, who was his caregiver as he battled frontal temporal dementia and primary progressive aphasia during the last years of his life. He is also survived by his siblings Clyde Denson ("Buddy") Simmons (Sue) of Port Arthur, Texas and Della Best (Bob) of Dallas, Texas and four wonderful children: Cheryl Simmons, Michael Simmons, Brandon Simmons (Izabella), Ashley Means (Malcolm); and ten grandchildren: Mikaele MacGregor, Clyde Simmons, Aaron Simmons

Francisco, Keilani Simmons Francisco, Ian Simmons Francisco, Julian Simmons, Elise Simmons, Francisco Means, Agustin Means and Louis Oliver Means.

Memorial services will be held at St. John's Episcopal Church on Saturday, August 5 at 11am. He will be put to rest in the National Cemetery in Tallahassee, Florida.

The family would like to extend gratitude to everyone at Big Bend Hospice who so lovingly cared for Max and to the Dozier House and its staff whose kindness, compassion and care during Max's last days will never be forgotten.

In lieu of flowers, Memorial gifts may be directed to Big Bend Hospice: <https://bigbendhospice.charityproud.org/Donate>

The family is being assisted by Jackie Fulford and James Sircy, of Young Fulford Funeral Home and Crematory, Tallahassee, Florida. 850.610.4444

Previous Events

Memorial Service

AUG 5. 11:00 AM (ET)

St. John's Episcopal Church
211 N. Monroe Street
Tallahassee, FL 32301

Tribute Wall



“ *Max Allen Simmons*

October 22, 2023 at 10:27 PM



“ *Max Allen Simmons*

October 09, 2023 at 11:25 AM



“ *It is not possible for me to imagine anything written that could be fully worthy of the man Max Simmons; but the wonderful obituary is as close as possibility allows. To me Max was a mentor, guide and true genius at air transport operations. He was a calm and steady hand when things got complicated and always a friend when one was needed. Max was in ways personal and professional an example many of us strove to copy and one I never quite got to. Mara, I remember the times with you and Max and your boat on the waters of Arkansas. My experience is that sadness does not go away with time nor do I think it should. It does become less burdensome. I am confident you will continue to be grateful for your years with Max as I know he was with his time with you. My sympathy to you and your family,
Love,
Jay White*

Jay White - August 04, 2023 at 05:14 PM

GS

“ *Glen Shaide purchased the Florist Choice Bouquet for the family of Max Allen Simmons.*



Glen Shaide - August 04, 2023 at 11:31 AM

LF

“ *Lorene, Rachelle, Chris & families purchased the Large Basket Garden for the family of Max Allen Simmons.*



Lorene, Rachelle, Chris & families - August 04, 2023 at 10:34 AM

LF

“ *Lorene, Rachelle, Chris & families planted a [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Max Allen Simmons.*

Lorene, Rachelle, Chris & families - August 04, 2023 at 10:34 AM



“ *Serene Reflections Bouquet was purchased for the family of Max Allen Simmons.*



August 03, 2023 at 02:27 PM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Max Allen Simmons.

August 03, 2023 at 02:27 PM



“ Divine Peace Bouquet was purchased for the family of Max Allen Simmons.



August 03, 2023 at 10:40 AM



“ Sentiments of Serenity Spray was purchased for the family of Max Allen Simmons.



August 02, 2023 at 11:52 AM



“ A [Memorial Tree](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) was planted in honor of Max Allen Simmons.

August 02, 2023 at 11:52 AM



“ Peaceful White Lilies Basket was purchased for the family of Max Allen Simmons.



July 31, 2023 at 12:21 PM



“ *Treasured Lilies Spray was purchased for the family of Max Allen Simmons.*



July 30, 2023 at 04:56 PM



“ *Beautiful in Blue was purchased for the family of Max Allen Simmons.*



July 30, 2023 at 03:55 PM



“ *Dear Mara, Ashley and Brandon my deepest condolences for your loss. Max was an exceptional person and will always be remember with love and admiration by those of us to have had the honor to have known him. I enjoyed his company and conversation in all the many interpreter's events we had. I can imagine how hard it must be to all of you. All my love, sympathy and prayers go out to you. This world needs more men like him.*

Emilia D'Auteuil - July 30, 2023 at 01:48 PM



“ *It was always a fun time when we were with Max & Mara. He would recount his days with the Flying Tigers flying transport during WWII. Amazing gentleman. My condolences & love to Mara & the entire Simmons family.*

Tracy Stewart - July 30, 2023 at 12:02 PM

JS

“ I have the fondest memories of Max and the Simmons family. It was always a fun time whether fly fishing, Xmas parties (or any other kind), weddings or a trip to Mexico. He and Mara raised a remarkable family. My prayers to you all.

John Stewart - July 30, 2023 at 10:13 AM

SH

“ My deepest sympathies and prayers go out the family. Ashley and Brandon, when your mother called I knew your father was called home. It's never easy to loose a loved one or a dear friend. I will always remember our conversations and times our families spent together. You know your dad loved his family immensely and he knew he was loved in return. Every conversation we had included words of his children as he was so proud of what you have become. Max will be greatly missed by all that knew him.

sam horn - July 29, 2023 at 09:49 PM

ER

“ Mara,Ashley and the entire family,
My deepest sympathy and prayers for your family. Liz Roberts- LR
District Ct.

Elizabeth Roberts - July 29, 2023 at 07:48 PM

RC

“ My dear Mara, I can only tell you that I have deeply missed Max and you. Brandon and Ashley, your father was always so proud of you both! When we visited I had to listen to his never ending praise of you both! Izabella and Malcolm, Max always had proudly extolled you both! And he deeply loved the grandkids. Mara, God only takes the good ones first so HE can have more Angels to look over us that remain here! I know that Max and Victoria are watching over us and our families! I will always be here for you and will forever be grateful for letting me be your and Max's friend! Dick.

Richard Cochran - July 29, 2023 at 09:00 AM