Richard "Dick" Sexton Brennan III

Birth: Dec. 23, 1945

Death: Dec. 9, 2013

Richard “Dick” Sexton Brennan III, 67, of Houston, passed away peacefully on December 9, 2013 at Methodist Hospital in Sugar Land, TX.

Dick was born on December 23, 1945 in Evanston, IL to Richard and Marjorie Brennan. He was a graduate of Loyola Academy and Loyola University of Chicago.

Dick is survived by his wife, Ngoc S. Brennan; his children and their spouses, Mia Brennan and Tony Huynh (Houston), James Brennan (Houston), Richard S. IV and Kirstie Brennan (Kinston, NC), Christine B. and Christian Schick (Houston), and Cindy Brennan (Houston); his siblings, Kathy and Jim Fretheim (Bemidji, MN) Mary and John Zazverskey (Plymouth, MN), and Thomas and Ann Brennan (Greenville, SC); and his thirteen grandchildren, Ryan Brennan (Virginia Beach, VA), Christopher, Matthew, Michael, and Caitlin Huynh (Houston), Nicholas and Amy Brennan (Houston), Sloan and Millar-Claire Brennan (Kinston, NC), Sofia and Brennan Schick (Houston), and Amelia and Delaney Rodriguez (Houston).

Dick was a career military man, serving in the US Army for 20 years and fought in the Vietnam War. He retired at the rank of Major. After retirement, he taught 4th grade at South Polk Elementary in Fort Polk, LA until he moved to Houston in 1997.

Dick enjoyed watching college football and basketball. He rooted for his home team, “Da Bears” each NFL season. He loved spending time with and spoiling his grandchildren. He was an avid reader and it was rare to find him without a book or his Nook.

A loving husband, father, “Papa”, brother, godfather, uncle, cousin and friend, Dick will be missed greatly by all who were blessed to have him in their lives.

The family will receive visitors on Monday, December 16 from 6-8 PM at 954 Coachlight Drive Houston, TX 77077.

The funeral mass will be on Tuesday, December 17, at 10:30 AM at St. John Vianney Catholic Church, 625 Nottingham Oaks Trail, Houston TX 77079.

A reception will follow mass at St. Jude Hall of St. John Vianney Catholic Church.

Interment of his ashes will be on Tuesday, December 17 at 1:30 PM at The Houston National Cemetery, 10410 Veterans Memorial Drive, Houston TX 77038.

In lieu of flowers, please consider contributing to Nicholas and Amy Brennan’s education fund at Chase Bank.

Note: US Army - Vietnam

Burial:

Houston National Cemetery , Houston, Harris County, Texas, USA

Plot: C-13, Row D, Site 85

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An officer's memories of Dick Brennan:

Steve, here is a brief story of Dick's service in Vietnam. The author was Dick's Operations Officer in Vietnam.

I was the S-3 of the 520th Trans Bn, Aviation Maintenance & Support (DS/GS) in June of 1971. Dick was assigned to the Supply Platoon of the 165th Trans Co. We were on a base about 20 miles north of Saigon/Ben Hoa. We had a Fixed Wing DS Company, the 56th Trans about 30 miles south east of us at Long Than. On the Phu Loi base we had the 20th Trans Co. (GS), the 165th Trans DS and the 605th DS/GS, an Aviation Electronic Repair (AVEL), a Capstone Detachment for retrograde and Pipesmoke, an aircraft recovery platoon, an a CH-47 operation.

Dick was a TC officer who had attended the Supply Management Officers Course at Ft Lee and the battalion had the Direct Support Supply Activity (DSSA) for Military Region III for all aircraft parts.

Dick had been assigned initially in Saigon with the Aviation Materiel Management Center. He was handpicked to run the DSSA because he was trained in running the new computer system with a daily batch processing. Dick was a nerdy type who lived in the warehouse and spoke Quartermaster to other supply types. Daily requisition cycles was star wars stuff back then. They were using what became the DS4 divisional materiel management computer and it was primitive. The punch cards would swell because of the heat and humidity and the feeder would continuously jam. It would take hours to run the nightly cycles.

Dick was quiet and subdued and a bit overwhelmed by the bravado of the pilots and crews. It was a wild west time in Vietnam and he was a serious person. The Treaty had already been signed in Paris and we were turning the war over to the Vietnamese Army and Air Force. The bad guys had not quit and we were the last American firebase between Saigon and the Cambodian border. All combat arms units had been moved out or sent home. Only one brigade of the 1st Cav was left and they were 50 miles away.

Dick was a solid officer who was a super logistician. My favorite story happened in early 1972. I had flown to Saigon to pick up a Civilian Contractor at Tan Son Nhut airport. I met him at the civilian terminal and we rode to the Helipad. He had his wife with him as he lived in a nearby village as did all of the contractors. I had just lifted off and turned toward Phu Loi when I received an FM radio call from the Company 1st Sgt. They had just been attacked with mortars. I raced back to Phu Loi and received several Sit Reps. Rounds had landed on the flight line and many aircraft had shrapnel damage and there were several injured soldiers. Another round had landed on our company supply building and the roof was blown off. First Sergeant said he could seen the aircraft supply yard and there were at least twenty soldiers killed. They were lying all over the area.

As I neared the airstrip I shot my approach to the far side of the supply yard. I saw soldiers walking around but no one on the ground. 1st Sgt amended his report. No one was killed but a few soldiers had minor injuries in the supply platoon. I landed and shut the aircraft down and headed for the supply yard. Dick met me and reported what happened. He had been conducting a class for the platoon in the yard when the attack started. He had just instructed them that if they had a mortar attack, hit the ground and lie flat. Do not move until there is an all clear. The mortars landed nearby and they followed instructions. They did not move. First Sergeant had looked out into the yard and there were about 40 soldiers following instructions. He thought that they could not move and were probably dead.

Thus, we had experienced the first lesson of command. "The first report is always wrong."