

Evan Price Reese



Captain Evan P. Reese, USN (Ret.), passed away on 16 September 2021 in Oak Harbor, WA, from complications from a massive stroke suffered in April 2020. He passed his final months in his Whidbey Island waterfront home under the care of his life partner, Rosemary Ihrig, and home care specialists, who ministered to his needs until his passing.

Born in Ohio in 1937, Evan completed one year at Ohio State University and was then appointed to the Naval Academy, graduating in 1960.

Following flight training, he received his Wings of Gold in 1961. His first fleet assignment was with VA-176, flying the A-1 Skyraider embarked in SHANGRI-LA. Follow-on shore duty was as a basic jet flight instructor at NAS Meridian, MS. In 1969, Evan transitioned to the A-6 Intruder and joined VA-196 at NAS Whidbey Island, WA, making two Vietnam combat cruises. On the first of these, while flying off RANGER, he and his bombardier/navigator were shot down over the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos. Their rescue the following morning resulted in Evan's return to RANGER and to his squadron. Subsequent shore duty assignments were with the Bureau of Naval Personnel and on the JCS Staff.

Returning to Whidbey in 1976, then-Commander Reese transitioned to the EA-6B Prowler, following which he served as executive officer and then commanding officer of VAQ-136. During Evan's active flying career, he amassed 124 combat sorties, 6,124 flight hours and 897 carrier landings.

To round out his 30-year career, Evan served as operations officer on ENTERPRISE and ashore as Inspector General for U.S. Naval Forces, Europe. Subsequently, he served on the staff of the Chief of Naval Operations and as a member of the Navy Council of Personnel Boards.

Following his Navy retirement, Evan served as consultant to the U.S. House Appropriations Committee-Surveys and Investigations Staff, in the field of airport facilities and their security. Evan and Rosemary returned to his Whidbey Island home in 1999. In retirement, he was an avid crabber, a superb bird carver and an aspiring watercolor artist. He was active in the local Association of Naval Aviation squadron, the Oak Harbor First United Methodist Church and the Oak Harbor Area Council of the Navy League.

November-December 2021 Shipmate