



## Vernor Elwyn Gowen Jr

June 6, 1963 - September 16, 2023

Vernor Elwyn Gowen Jr, 60, of Perryville, Missouri died Saturday, September 16, 2023 at Independence Care Center of Perry County, MO.

He was born June 6, 1963 in Seattle, WA to the late Vernor Elwyn Gowen Sr and survived by mother Irene (Jester) Owens and step father Rev. Dr. Bruce Owens of Perryville.

He married Vicki Binger Slawter on February 13, 1995 in Spokane, WA. She preceded him in death on February 13, 2023.

Vern served in the United States Air Force for 21 years and 4 months before retiring. He retired from the USAF on November 30, 2002. He was Baptized in Greek Orthodox Faith.

Survivors include brother, Nicholas J. Galanopoulos of Fairview Heights, IL; step-son, Brett Slawter of Billings, MT; three step-grandchildren, Kasandra Anderson, Liam & Kaeloni Slawter.

He was preceded in death by his father, wife, Vicki Gowen; and sister, Theresa Snow.

Inurnment will be at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery in St. Louis, MO,

with Military Honors provided by the US Air Force Honors Team on Friday, October 13, 2023 at 2:30 pm with Rev. Dr. Bruce Owens officiating.

Memorial contributions may be given to Pancreatic Cancer Research Foundation.

Online condolences may be made at [www.fordandyoungfuneralhome.com](http://www.fordandyoungfuneralhome.com).

Ford & Young Funeral Home is in charge of arrangements.

# Cemetery Details

## Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery

2900 Sheriden Rd.  
St. Louis, MO 63125

# Tribute Wall

MM

“ I worked with Vern at Fairchild AFB for nearly 10 years and remained close friends with Vern and Vicki for 34 years. It has been nearly 2 years since Vern passed away and it is still a very sore spot for those of us who were close to him. He was very hard working, thoughtful, dedicated, and kind. He spent many hours working on computer programs that he wrote himself to make all of our finance jobs easier without any compensation from the Air Force or the government. He was always willing to teach anyone who was willing to learn.

His wife, Vicki, was my genealogy buddy. I flew to Salt Lake City with her to do genealogy research several times. We both had sons and had so many similarities. To have both Vern and Vicki pass away within months of each other was devastating and Vern was just too young to have his life cut short like this. My husband and I, plus Alex Reynolds and his wife, Kelly had gone to dinner with Vern for his birthday at the beginning of June 2023. Vern then drove to Perryville and assumed he was going to be hired for a new job he had applied for. Then by July 5, 2023 \*this\* diagnosis of pancreatic cancer happened! So unfair. Vern called a few times while he was hospitalized when he was able ... but I could tell he was having trouble speaking and breathing. He said he was going to fight it HARD but unfortunately he wasn't able to beat it. Alex Reynolds and I still talk about Vern often. We will always miss him and think about his family knowing they are the ones who really suffer. Thinking and praying for you all .

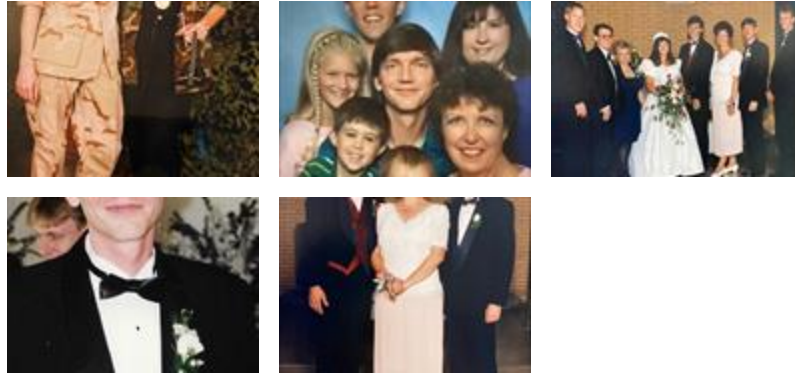
A former co-worker and good friend, Michele Taylor McClafin

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Michele Taylor McClafin - August 18, 2025 at 06:03 PM

MM

“ 6 files added to the album Vern Gowen & family



Michele Taylor McClafin - August 18, 2025 at 05:36 PM



“ Vernor Elwyn Gowen Jr

October 20, 2023 at 02:54 AM



“ Vernor Elwyn Gowen Jr

October 20, 2023 at 01:44 AM



“ I will always be grateful for Vern unconditionally loving and supporting Vicki, my sister/his wife, and my three nephews Tim-Brett-Alex and their families. He was inherently a good man with a worldly view of life gathered throughout his USAF career. Able to connect with family and friends with his great story-telling of his personal experiences, his intelligence and wisdom. I always enjoyed my visits with him. My family extends their heartfelt sympathy to all who have been woven into the fabric of Vern's life. Hugs to all, Terry Tallan

Terry Tallan - October 08, 2023 at 10:43 AM

AB

*Bless you for keeping Vern's legacy with respect and honor. I served with him and he was an outstanding, highly intelligent, dedicated and loyal airman as well as a good friend. May he rest in peace. My heartfelt condolences. Is his wife still alive ? I'm sorry for your loss..*

**Angela Bayón** - August 05, 2024 at 12:45 AM

MM

*Angela, no - unfortunately, Vicki passed away 7 months prior to Vern passing away. Vicki passed away February 13, 2023 from a brain bleed. It was fairly quick. She had the brain bleed on Friday afternoon/evening and she passed on that Sunday. She is buried in the Pines Cemetery in the Spokane Valley (WA) next to her mother. Vern purchased the headstone and had it engraved prior to him traveling to Missouri thinking he was being hired for a new job. Then *\*this\** happened.*

**Michele Taylor McClafin** - August 18, 2025 at 06:09 PM

CG

*I'm Vern's half-sister, Cindy. It's nice to see such amazing stories about Vern. Our dad, also Vernor Jr, would have been honored to see such great things said about his son. (Grandpa was Vernor Sr., Dad was Jr., Vern should have been III, but confusion from his mom)*

**Cindy Gowen** - October 24, 2025 at 02:35 PM

TL

“ Terry L. planted a grove of 3 [Memorial Trees](/store/Product.aspx?ProductId=4518) in honor of Vernor Elwyn Gowen Jr.

**Terry L.** - October 08, 2023 at 10:21 AM



“ *Full Of Love Bouquet was purchased for the family of Vernor Elwyn Gowen Jr.*



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October 07, 2023 at 12:50 PM