



## Col. Bernie Bass

June 24, 1919 - September 18, 2010

Bernie Sanford Bass, Colonel, (United States Air Force (Ret.)). Age 91. Died September 18, 2010, at Saint Thomas Hospital, Nashville, TN. Born at New Middleton, TN, the son of Linnie (Gibbs) and James Lillard Bass, Sr., he graduated from Gordonsville High School, from Morgan School, Petersberg, TN, from Cumberland University, and from Old Dominion University, Norfolk, VA with an advanced degree in American history. He was preceded in death on December 23, 2008, by his beloved wife of 63 years, Mary Helen Whitfield Bass, by his Father in 1953, Mother in 1988, brother Paul in 1964, and infant sister, Cara Duncan, in 1925. He was a committed Christian, a devoted family man, and proud of his service to his country. He was also thankful for a devoted and loving wife, Mary Helen. They were married on August 30, 1945 in her hometown Methodist Church of Perry, Florida. They were subjected to many separations due to military assignments including 16 months duty in Korea and Japan in 1953-1954 and 12 months duty in South Vietnam in 1969-1970, and innumerable temporary duty assignments. Colonel Bass is survived by three children: Ronald Dennis Bass, Washington, D.C., Cara Bass (Robert) Chipkevich, Lebanon, TN, Mark Duncan (Ronda) Bass, St. Charles, MO, four grandchildren, Benjamin (Mindy) Chipkevich, Memphis, TN, Mary Ann Chipkevich, Lebanon, TN, Stephanie Bass, St. Charles, MO, Sgt. Scott Duncan Bass, U.S. Army, stationed in Afghanistan, brother and sister-in-law James and Erma Bass, Carthage, and numerous nieces and nephews. Colonel Bass volunteered for the US Army Air Forces as an aviation Cadet in

September 1941 and was commissioned a 2nd LT., and awarded pilots wings in April 1942. During World War II, he flew two combat tours: in French Morocco, Tunisia, Pantelleria, and Sicily in Curtiss P-40 aircraft, and France and Germany in Republic P-47 aircraft, completing 114 combat missions. Following the war he returned to college and later was an instructor at Castle Heights Military Academy. Recalled to active duty in 1951, he served in the United States, Korea, Japan, France, England, and South Vietnam. He was squadron commander of North American F-100 equipped squadrons at Cannon AFB, Clovis, NM, at Chaumont Air Base, France, and RAF Lakenheath, England. He served as Base Commander at RAF Bentwaters/Woodbridge Air Bases, England, and Cam Ranh Bay Air Base, Republic of Vietnam. Following a tour of duty as Director, United States Air Force Museum, Wright-Patterson AFB, OH, he retired on November 1, 1976 with 30 years, 5 months active duty service to his country. Awards and decorations include Legion of Merit with one Oak Leaf Cluster, Distinguished Flying Cross with one Oak Leaf Cluster, and Air Medal with thirteen Oak Leaf Clusters. In retirement, he returned to Castle Heights Military Academy as an instructor. Colonel Bass was a member of First Presbyterian Church, Lebanon, and served as Deacon, Elder, Sunday School leader and teacher. He was a former Trustee of Cumberland University, and Chairman, Wilson County Library Board, member of the Order of Daedalians, P-40 Warhawk Pilots Association, P-47 Thunderbolt Pilots Association, American Legion, VFW, Charter member of the Air Force Association, and a Rotarian. He was an honorary member of the Noncommissioned Officers Association of America, and of the Ohio Chapter POW/MIA. Visitation on Tuesday, September 21, from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at Ligon and Bobo Funeral Home, Lebanon, and at the church one hour before the funeral service. Service from sanctuary of First Presbyterian Church, Lebanon, on Wednesday, September 22, at 11:00 a.m. conducted by Reverend Megan Ritchie. In lieu of flowers, memorials may be made to First Presbyterian Church, the New Middleton United Methodist Church, or a charity of your choice. Active pallbearers:

Benjamin Chipkevich, James Robert Bass, Paul Daniel Bass, David Bass, William Bass, Gordon Bone, and Jerry Hunt. Honorary pallbearers: Sgt. Scott Bass, Teamon Agee, New Middleton, Rodney Ahles, Robert C. Bone, Stratton Bone, Betty Clay, Carol Dedman, James L. Fletcher, Chestnut Mound, George Harding, Glen C. Holder, San Antonio, TX, Jack Howard, Stephen J. King, La Mesa, CA, J.B. Leftwich, Herb Simmons, Franklin, NC, John E. Stephens, and Ruling Elders of First Presbyterian Church. Interment Wednesday at 1:00 P.M. in Gordonsville Cemetery. Military honors will be accorded.