

Alfred Eugene "Gene" Parker, 73, of Panama City, passed away Sunday, August 5, 2012. He was born December 9, 1938 in Panama City. He graduated from Bay High School in 1956 and went to college at Gulf Coast Community College and the University of Florida until he was old enough to get into the U.S. Air Force Aviation Cadet Program.

During his career as a pilot, he served in the U.S. Air Force as a forward air controller in the Vietnam War. He went on to fly for the Florida Marine Patrol, U.S. Customs and Pan American Airlines. He was instrumental in helping to start several small airlines and had the honor of flying the Presidential Press Corp as well as the Miami Dade S.W.A.T. Team. In addition, he instructed many aspiring pilots and retired from the U.S. Air Force Reserves.

He is survived by his wife of 51 years, Ruby Parker; four children, LaDonna Alexander (Brad), Sheri Hill, Suzanne Shelton (Kevin), Daniel Parker (Heather); eight grandchildren; and four great grandchildren. Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m. on Thursday in the Wilson Funeral Home Chapel with Dr. John Friedman officiating. A private family burial will follow at Evergreen Memorial Gardens.

LTC (R) Gene Parker passed away 5 Aug 2012. As a Captain, he served Jan-May 1966 as Red Marker 04.