



# *Stillwater Pioneer Athlete Memorial*

---



## JOE HOWARD JARVIS

November 24, 1943 - February 2, 2003

Stillwater High School Class of 1962

9th Annual Memorial Induction Ceremony

September 25, 2004

The three words that best describe Joe Jarvis is "A Team Player" that was Joe when he was growing up, when he was in High School, and throughout his career.

Joe was born on November 24, 1943 to Joe Henry and Rose Jarvis. He was raised in Stillwater and attended Stillwater public schools with his sister, Judy and Brother, Richard. Joe's father was killed in a plane crash when he was only five years old. His mother, Rose, was a major influence on his life but from that time on Joe accepted the burden and the privilege of being the "Man of the House". Joe did this with easy grace and no complaints just as he accepted responsibility throughout his school and his military career.

Joe was small even by Pioneer standards, he was just under six feet tall and weighed in well below 160. He made up for a lot of this with hard work and a big heart. The only problem was that he lined up behind a High School All American at tight end. How does one contribute when there is very little chance that you will start a game? Joe did what he had done all his life, he worked as hard as he could and he encouraged his teammates with a friendly smile and a cheerful pat on the back. There was not one ounce of negativism in him. Joe was a team player and his example of hard work and positive attitude inspired the team and because of his hard work, he did get to play in a lot of games. The 1961 football team compiled an extraordinary record. The Pioneers were 10-0. They were undefeated, untied and unchallenged. The defense only allowed three teams to score on them, a total of 30 points and the offense scored a total of 400 points. This team was considered by many to be one of the best in school history and ended up tied with Norman as the number one ranked team in the state. Unfortunately, they were denied a playoff game due to conference rules. Joe also participated in wrestling and once again he found himself in the role of team player. He was behind a great athlete who was an eventual state champion and NCAA runner up. Joe set the example of what it meant to be a team player. He had a great work ethic and pushed his fellow players to perform to the best of their abilities. Today we call that Pioneer Pride.

As a well-rounded Pioneer, Joe accumulated many honors. He was in Who's Who of America, Boy's State, Boy Rotarian, Student Council, and National and State Honor Society. Joe was held in high esteem by his fellow classmates and he led by example. During a time when Viet Nam was becoming more and more a part of our lives, Joe chose to serve. He sought and was honored with an appointment to the Air Force Academy.

Joe's career in the Air Force began at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs. He graduated in 1966 with a degree in Engineering and Astronautics. He trained as a Navigator and was assigned to Viet Nam in one of the oldest planes in the Air Force inventory, an EC-47, more commonly known as a DC 3. He spent a year flying low and slow over hostile territory from Pleiku and Nha Trang. He was then assigned to Charleston AFB where he transitioned into the newest and biggest plane in the Air Force, the C-5A. It was in Charleston that he met and married Gail Murphy in 1970. They lived a very interesting and exciting life as a career Air Force family. Joe continued to fly to Vietnam as a Navigator on the C141 and C5A and then went back to school and received his Masters Degree in Engineering in 1973. This led to an assignment to the Air Force Academy as an associate professor of Mathematics until 1978. They also had their two children, Joleigh in 1975 and Garret in 1978 during this period. Joe returned to the operational field in 1978, first in California and then in Yokota, Japan, one of their most interesting assignments. Joe continued his career in the Air Force and retired as a Lt. Colonel in 1988. Joe started a second career in financial planning and small business information systems and received his MBA from the University of West Florida. He was active in his adopted community of Niceville, Florida and was a member of Rotary and worked as Treasurer of Habitat for Humanity. In each of Joe's many career paths the one recurring theme is team work. Joe drew from his early childhood days and his days at Stillwater High School to focus on the big picture, it was never what is best for Joe, but rather what can I do to help My Country, My Crew, My Students, or My Family. Sometimes even at the expense of his career. Joe especially had a deep love for his family and in the difficult times and sometimes long separations, he and Gail actually grew closer together. He had no greater love than that for his wife and children. He would be proud to be remembered as a team player, a devoted son and brother, a loving husband and father and to those of us who knew him along the way, a good friend, someone you could always count on.

Presenter  
Mark Grimsley  
Stillwater High School Class of 1962