



## Colonel Roland Friese

December 25, 1932 - August 28, 2012

Colonel Roland Friese passed away Tuesday, August 28, 2012 at his home in San Antonio, Texas. He was born December 25, 1932 to Maria and Anton Friese in Rumberg, located in the mountainous region of Sudetenland, in northern Czechoslovakia nka Jirikov, Czech Republic, and grew up in Germany's Third Reich. As required, at the age of 10, Roland became a member of the "Deutsche Jugend", or German Youth, a faction of the Hitler Youth. His father and older brother served in the German military during WWII and were both taken prisoner of war by the British in 1945. Meanwhile, along with most Germans, Roland and his mother were expelled from their homeland during the Russian invasion. His sister remained behind and was interned by the Czechs. In 1946, Roland and his mother were reunited with his father in East Germany. The family walked 300 miles to the East/West German border, where they were captured by Russian forces and spent three weeks in a Russian prison camp. They later were sent to a detention camp in the American sector of West Germany. The Frieses were ultimately sponsored by a West German family and were taken in as workers in Bavaria, where older brother Gerhard was able to locate them with the help of the Red Cross. In 1952 the Friese family, with the exception of Roland's sister, emigrated to the U.S. and settled in Bandera, Texas as workers on the old Montague Ranch. Roland became a U.S. citizen in 1958. In 1953 he was drafted and served in the U.S. Army until 1955. In 1956, he joined the Army Reserve, serving with Ft. Sam Houston's 9th Division Army Command until his

retirement as Colonel in 1986. During his 33 years of military service, Friese earned numerous decorations, including the European Occupation Medal, Korean Service Medal, and Meritorious Service Medal with Cluster and Legion of Merit. He was a graduate of the military's Advanced Information Course, and of Command and General Staff College.

Colonel Friese was a dedicated and tenacious worker. His civilian career included positions in engineering, drafting and production with the Texas Highway Department, Southern Pacific Railroad, and various engineering firms, culminating with tenure at Alamo Iron Works as Chief Engineer and Production Manager. The final 36 years of his career were spent with Markle Manufacturing Company of San Antonio, where he rose from Vice President, to President, and finally owner of the company, which he held until 2004.

Roland had an extensive knowledge of and loved to discuss world history. His business associates knew him as a truly honest but tough negotiator. He loved his pets and extended immeasurable kindnesses to any animal with which he came into contact. He enjoyed growing and babying plants from seed and was most proud of the mature fruit and pecan trees he raised in his own backyard. He mentored many in family and business, was always willing to lend a helping hand, and gave freely to charity. He will be dearly missed by many.

Colonel Roland Friese is survived by his loving wife of 22 years, Bonnie, his daughter Ingrid Petty and grandson Jason Petty, stepdaughter Kim Potter and grandson David Potter, and stepdaughter Heather Yager and husband Bill, and grandsons Jack Kirkham and Nicholas Yager, all of San Antonio. He was predeceased by his son Bruno, his brother Gerhard and his sister Gertrud.

Roland requested memorial donations be sent to Wildlife Rescue & Rehabilitation, PO Box 369, Kendalia, TX 830 336-2725.

## SERVICE

Visitation will be held Thursday, August 30, 2012 from 4-8 PM at Mission Park Funeral Chapels North. A graveside service will be held at 9:30 AM Friday August 31, 2012 at Ft. Sam Houston with Military Funeral Honors, 1520 Harry Wurzbach Rd., San Antonio, TX 78209.