



Larry H. Della Bitta

February 27, 1931 - July 25, 2025

Brigadier General Larry H. Della Bitta passed away at home in San Luis Obispo, unexpectedly, on Friday, July 25, 2025, surrounded by his wife (Janice), daughter (Lesli), and son-in-law (Stan).

Larry, 94, was born in Paso Robles, on February 27, 1931, to Minnie (Rodriguez) and Lawrence Della Bitta. The family moved to San Luis Obispo shortly after Larry's birth, where he was raised with his brother, Jack Della Bitta and sister, Nadine Wilson (Deceased).

Shortly after graduating from San Luis Obispo Senior High School in 1948, Larry joined the California National Guard and reached the rank of Master Sergeant before attending the California Military Academy Officer Candidate School.

Commissioned a Second Lieutenant in 1955, he served with the 123rd Maintenance Company when the unit was called to active duty during the 1961 Berlin Crisis and served as Executive Officer and Company Commander during service in Europe.

He returned to the California National Guard in 1962 and moved to battalion level assignments before transferring to the Logistics Officer position in the 115th Area Support Group.

Larry volunteered for active duty in 1968 and was sent to Vietnam where he commanded the 63rd Maintenance Battalion. He worked in the supply division of the U.S. Army Headquarters before returning to duty at Aberdeen Proving Ground where he was Branch Chief of the Army Ordnance Center and Senior Instructor at the school.

In May 1972, he returned to the Guard and moving to Chief of the Installations Branch, at the Headquarters in Sacramento, California. He was promoted to Deputy and Assistant Chief of Staff assignment and selected to attend the Army War College, in Carlisle, Pennsylvania, and graduating in 1979. He returned to Command the 115th Support Group before being named Chief of Staff, California Army National Guard in 1981. He served in that capacity until January 1983 when he assumed the position of Deputy Commanding General, Manpower, Fiscal and Special Resources. In January of 1984, he was promoted and assigned as Assistant Division Commander, 40th Infantry Division (Mech). In January 1986, he assumed the assignment as Deputy Adjutant General Army Division until May 1987 when he was assigned as Deputy Adjutant General Resource Management.

General Della Bitta's awards and decorations include (2) Legion of Merit, Bronze Star Medal, Army Reserve Component Achievement Medal, Meritorious Service Medal with (4) Oak Leaf Clusters, Army Commendation Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm, Vietnam Service Medal with Five Battle Stars,

Army Service Ribbon, Meritorious Unit Citation, California Medal of Merit, Federal Service Ribbon, California Service Medal, Outstanding Unit Award Ribbon and State Service Ribbon.

In addition to the Army War College, Larry graduated from the Command and General Staff College and several ordnance branch schools. He holds a Bachelor's Degree in Social Science from California State University in Sacramento and a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Golden State University.

After retirement, Larry stayed very active, and because of his love for golf, was the TV Chairman for the PGA Senior Champion Tournament for the Gold Rush in Rancho Murietta, CA, for 12 years. And as a single digit handicapper, he was always entering golf tournaments and loved the competition, and in 1994 won the Senior Match Play Championship at Rancho Murietta. Larry also has (2) hole in ones. You could say, he had a love of all sports, to include football, basketball, track, racquetball and handball.

Larry also had a love for music and played the piano beautifully, and in his high school years, he played the clarinet in a band.

Larry is survived by his wife, (55 years married), Janice Jonsin, a daughter, Lesli and son-in-law, Stan Coelho, six wonderful grandchildren, Tanya, Gabriel, Scott, Shawn, Heather, and Nick, and eight fantastic great-grandchildren, Bailey, Alissa, Bradly, Caleb, Kai, Isabella (Izzy) and twins, Xavier and Eli. He also has three beautiful children, Jonn Jonsin, Larry Della Bitta, and Kim Lambert (all deceased).

Larry has had a very full and happy life and will be so missed by his family and friends.

To my Husband, my Dad, my Papa,

(We will always love you!)

There will be a private viewing for friends and family at Reis Family Mortuary on the 18th of August from 5 to 7pm. And a graveside funeral at the San Luis Cemetery on the 19th of August, starting at 2:00pm.

Cemetery Details

San Luis Cemetery

2 Higuera St
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

Previous Events

Graveside Service

AUG 19. 2:00 PM (PT)

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San Luis Obispo, CA 93401