

**Gerald (Jerry) Melvin Tanner**  
**March 5, 1945 – January 30, 2026.**



Gerald was born March 5, 1945, in Newcastle to Rolley and Margaret (May) Tanner. He was raised in Upton as the fourth of eight children. During his high school days, education was not his priority, sports and choir were. The day after graduating high school in 1963, Jerry, enlisted in the US Navy after boot camp Jerry attended machinery repair school in San Diego, California. He was then stationed aboard the USS Topeka CLG-8, a light missile cruiser. Every day he thanked the man above for giving him the opportunity to be aboard that ship for three years to learn a lifelong trade. After his three tours of duty as a blue water, Vietnam naval veteran in the Gulf of the Tonkin Bay, 1964-65-66, Jerry was honorably discharged as a MR2-E5 on May 27, 1967.

While in the service he met this young lady in Anaheim, California named Patricia Callison. They married on October 22, 1966. She gave him four daughters who they raised in Riverside, California for 27 years.

Jerry started his job as a machinist for the same company, Circle Seal Co., for 35 years, where he made parts for aerospace in the space shuttle program. Thanks to the G.I. Bill, Jerry went to night college from 1972 to 1977 where he received degrees in both government management and industrial management.

While raising their girls, he coached their softball teams and officiated sports for approximately 18 years, having the honor to umpire the Olympic softball team a few times. Jerry had many name changes in his life. In high school he was known as Jerry. During his Navy years, he was hooked with Vic. Most of his Navy buddies don't even know his real name. In California softball and in sports, he was called JT, but his kids still call him Dad, his favorite name was Papa. Jerry said he had a good life working with the people he knew, those he went to school with, coached, and officiated with. Those he played with, and winning a state championship in football, coaching two state championship softball team teams on the same day. He was still good friends with a great deal of people from that time. After moving to Missouri in 2005, Jerry and Pat found an amazing home church with amazing people where they attended for over 18 years. On January 30, 2026, while surrounded by his family at home the Lord took Jerry into his heavenly home.

Jerry leaves behind his bride of 59 years Patricia (Callison) Tanner, four daughters Tricia (Loran) Todd, Ozark, Arkansas, Tina Tanner of Springfield, Missouri, Tammy Tanner of Springfield, Jeri Lynn (Gilbert) Holdway of Springfield, six grandchildren Dame Todd of Ozark, Dakota Todd of Ozark, Emma Holdway of Springfield, Hanna Holdway of Springfield, and Tanner Holdway of Springfield, four great grandchildren, Karson Todd, Sophia Todd, Lillian Todd, Logan Todd, one brother David Tanner of Upton, one sister, Rhodie Sherard of Gillette, plus many family and friends who loved him. He is preceded in death by his grandson, Andrew (Scooter) Todd, parents Rolley and Margaret Tanner, his siblings, Dixie, William, Gloria, Suellen and Samuel.

His visitation was held on Thursday, February 5, 2026, at Greenlawn North, located at 3506 N. National Ave., Springfield, MO 65803 from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Funeral service services were held on Friday, February 6, 2026 at 10:00 a.m. at Brighton Assembly of God, located at 5403 Highway F Brighton, MO 65617. After the funeral reception the family would like you to join them at Lee Cemetery on Lawrence 1131 Verona, MO 65769 where Gerald will be honored with full military honors. The family asked that those who attended wear patriotic colors, red, white and blue, or his favorite colors, blue and yellow to honor Gerald's military service.

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