**AW2 (NAC) David Edward Stenstrom**

**Written by Dale Myers**

30 July 1966 - 5 June 1988

VS-21 S-3A crash in the South China Sea right after catapult launch

Dave is the epitome of a Viking AW and will forever be my best friend as well as best friend to many others. Dave was born and raised in Rochester, MN. After graduation he joined the Navy and started the AW pipeline. Assigned to VS-21, he was on his second cruise to the WESTPAC area.

He married his high school sweetheart Marcy Batterson in September 1986. She still resides in Rochester, MN. He was survived by his father, mom, one brother, and two sisters - Tammy and Melissa.

On the personal side…

Dave was simply amazing as a husband to Marcy, sailor, AW, and friend. Everyone loved Dave and being around him. His charming, his “Popeye” like elbows, and it was always a good day when Dave was around. He worked his ass off in A School (we were classmates) and all he wanted was S-3s. One of the funniest stories is from A School. Over the Christmas break we were painting one of the classrooms. Dave was rehanging one of those large blinds while standing on the window ledge with his back to us. One of the instructors, a respected First Class walked in and said, “That looks nice.” Dave thought one of us were smart-assing him and without turning around just replied, “Fuck you.” (Dave didn’t cuss much). Our jaws dropped and Dave turned around to see the AW1 and he apologized and explained himself. AW1 just shrugged it off and said, “you’re good and you didn’t know I walked in.” Had a laugh after that. When we were in San Diego we watched Jeopardy on different channels. During final jeopardy he’d call me to get the answer as I’d just watched. I don’t know if Marcy ever caught on.

When the mishap occurred, I was fortunate to be TDY to VS-41 as I was going to VS-27 mid-cruise from VS-29. Marcy called me at about 2 a.m. Monday morning. Devastated and I’ll never forget that call. AWCS Paul Bigelow put me on leave to go to Rochester where Marcy was to wait for Dave to come home. He was laid to rest in Rochester with myself, his brother (an ST1), AW2 Darrin Simmons (VS-21), AW2 John Dahl, and his shop Chief / Escort AWC Larry Anderson (RIP) being pallbearers. His Mom was laid to rest next to him after she passed.

It’s been 36 years and I still miss Dave every day. There are many others here that feel the same. He never said a bad word about anyone and no one ever spoke bad about him. A true friend to everyone and would have been a Chief one day.

Miss you, Dave Stenstrom.