Robert Andrew 'Bob' Wells Jr.

Robert Andrew "Bob" Wells Jr., 65, of Pittsburg, died March 14, 2005 at his home.

He was born on Oct. 15, 1939, in Pittsburg to Robert Andrew and Vera Gardner Wells. He graduated with the Pittsburg High School Class of 1957. He lettered in high school football, basketball, and track. He was on the 1954 state championship football team which defeated Fort Scott and Springfield, Mo., high schools.

He attended the University of Kansas in Lawrence before graduating with a bachelor's of science degree in mathematics from Kansas State College of Pittsburg, now Pittsburg State University, in 1962. He earned his master of science degree in mathematics from PSU in 1963. He continued his graduate study in industrial engineering at Kansas State University in Manhattan.

He was commissioned a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army in September 1963 after participating in ROTC at PSU. He served two years of active duty. He was first assigned to the Fifth Infantry Division (Mechanized), "the Red Devils," and then served as an intelligence officer and aid to the commanding general of the Army Security Agency before being honorably discharged as a first lieutenant.

During the late 1960s, he worked as Saturn project engineer for Eagle Picher Industries. Batteries manufactured by EP supplied electrical power for many of the systems for the manned Apollo-Saturn V space vehicle and he participated in several Saturn launches at Cape Kennedy, Fla., including Apollo Seven, the first manned Saturn rocket launch; Apollo Eight, the first moon orbital mission; and Apollo Eleven, the first moon landing flight.

He later worked as a quality assurance engineer for the Space Shuttle project for LaBarge Inc.

He married Barbara Ann David on June 8, 1974, at Central City Christian Church, near Joplin. They divorced in 1986. She survives.

He attended the First United Methodist Church of Pittsburg and Countryside Christian Church.

Additional survivors include his son, Robert Jeffrey David Wells of Joplin; his sister Ann Olson of Lanham, Md.; a brother, Jim Wells of Overland Park; three nieces; and six nephews.

He was preceded in death by his parents.

Graveside services will be conducted 10 a.m. Saturday at the Garden of Memories Cemetery, with Dan Muter, minister, officiating. Friends may call from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. today at the Brenner Mortuary to sign the register. The casket will be closed. Friends are requested to meet at the cemetery for the services.

Arrangements are under the direction of the Brenner Mortuary, 114 E. Fourth St.

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