



COLONEL JOSEPH E. RYAN
UNITED STATE AIR ATTACHÉ TO MEXICO

USAF Biography as of June 1990

Colonel Joseph E. Ryan assumed the duties of U.S. air attaché to Mexico in June 1990.

Colonel Ryan was born April 14, 1944 in Greenville, South Carolina and attended Rutgers University. He earned a degree in aeronautical engineering from the U.S. Air Force Academy in 1967 and a master's degree in public administration from Golden Gate University in 1981. The colonel completed Squadron Officer School as a distinguished graduate, Army Command and General Staff College with honors in 1980, and Air War College in 1985.

Upon graduation from the academy in June 1967, he was commissioned as a second lieutenant. In September 1967 Colonel Ryan entered undergraduate pilot training at Moody Air Force Base, Georgia, and graduated in October 1968. He subsequently completed C-130 training at Sewart Air Force Base, Tennessee, and special aircrew training school at Eglin Air Force Base, Florida. From March 1969 to March 1970 he was assigned to the 39th Air Rescue and Recovery Squadron, Tuy Hoa Air Base, Republic of Vietnam. As co-pilot on Crown and King airborne rescue mission command aircraft, he accumulated almost 1,000 combat hours on 156 missions and helped save 30 lives.

In April 1970, Colonel Ryan was assigned to the 76th Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, Hickam Air Force Base, Hawaii. He participated in the Apollo and Skylab space programs as an emergency search and recovery aircraft commander. From May 1974 to April 1977 he was a military training instructor and basic flight instructor while on the commandant's staff at the Air Force Academy. He also received his parachutist rating while supervising the academy's summer training program at Fort Benning, Georgia.

Colonel Ryan's next assignment was to the 41st Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, McClellan Air Force Base, California as chief pilot and primary water sampling crew commander. He then was selected to attend the Army Command and General Staff College, graduating in June 1980.

From July 1980 to June 1982 he was the deputy branch chief for rescue operations on the Military Airlift Command Inspector General team, Scott Air Force Base, Illinois. Also, he was the primary rescue exercise planner for active and air reserve forces. Next Colonel Ryan moved to the 1550th Combat Crew Training Wing, Kirtland Air Force Base, New Mexico, where he served as operations officer of the 1551st Flying Training Squadron, the heavy-lift helicopter and HC-130 tanker training unit. He was commander of the 1550th Technical Training Squadron and the U.S. Air Force Pararescue School. His unit was selected by the Military Airlift Command as the Outstanding Rescue and Weather Reconnaissance Squadron for 1984.

Colonel Ryan attended Air War College, and upon graduation in 1985 was selected to remain on the faculty as a senior air warfare seminar director; chief, history of warfare studies; and director, military strategy analysis. In April 1989 he reported to Washington D.C. to begin training for his attaché assignment.

The colonel is a Command Pilot with 3,500 flying hours. His military awards and decorations include The Distinguished Flying Cross, Meritorious Service Medal with three oak leaf clusters, Air Medal with seven oak leaf clusters, and the Air Force Commendation Medal with two oak leaf clusters.

He was promoted to Colonel August 1, 1988 and retired in June of 1995

Colonel Ryan was married to the former Carol Burke of Martinsville, New Jersey, now of Cornelius, NC. They had three children: Leigh, Peter and David, who are now the parents of six grandchildren. Joe passed away on August 24, 2012.