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## rites set for retired air force colonel

*From "The Tulsa World," Thursday, February 23, 2006*

CLAREMORE -- Joseph L. Laughlin, a retired Air Force colonel, died Friday. He was 88.

Memorial services are set for 1 p.m. Sunday at Floral Haven Funeral Home in Broken Arrow.

Laughlin was born June 26, 1917, to Gertrude and Charles Laughlin in Grand Island, Neb.

He attended the University of Nebraska and then entered the flying cadet training program at Spartan School of Aeronautics in Tulsa.

A member of the 362nd Fighter Group, he was stationed in the European Theater during World War II, with combat assignments -- including the Battle of the Bulge -- in England, France and Germany.

In 1944, he assumed command of the 362nd Fighter Group and was promoted to colonel.

After the war, Laughlin married Audrey Jean McElroy.

He graduated from Air Command and Staff School in 1948 and Air War College in 1952.

His assignments then took him to locations worldwide, including at the Pentagon.

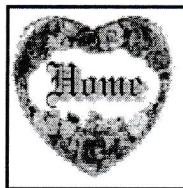
He was chief of staff of the 17th Air Force at Ramstein Air Base in Germany and wing commander of the 506th Tactical Air Command at Tinker Air Force Base.

He retired from active duty in 1969 after 30 years in the Air Force.

His military honors include the Silver Star, Legion of Merit, Air Force Longevity Service Award and the Presidential Unit Citation.

Laughlin is survived by his wife, Audrey Laughlin of Claremore; two sons, Bruce Laughlin of Tulsa and Craig Laughlin of Lewisville, Texas; two daughters, JoAnn Keirse and Kelly Rooker, both of Oklahoma City; and five grandchildren.

Friends are making memorial contributions to the Air Force Museum Foundation Inc., P.O. Box 33624, Wright-Patterson AFB, OH 45433.



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