



Bernard John Leary

November 21, 2011

Bernard John Leary BJ, 84, of Greenfield Drive, Monday, Nov. 21, 2011, at his home in Portsmouth, VA.

Born in Burlington, VT, he was the son of Elizabeth and Patrick Leary, the sixth of ten children. He grew up in Burlington, attending Cathedral Grade School and Cathedral High School. He was an extremely faithful altar boy in the Catholic Church throughout his very young years, in all kinds of VT weather, particularly serving early Masses at Mount Saint Mary's Convent. He also worked very hard as a young boy at many odd jobs, especially caddying on the golf course and shoveling snow, in order to help support his younger brothers and sisters during the Great Depression.

BJ left school to join the Navy during World War II and retired as Chief Petty after 25 years of military service, having served on various Naval Bases, especially Norfolk VA. He was proud of his service in the Sixth Fleet on ships such as the USS Forrestal, especially in the Mideast.

Following his Navy retirement, he worked for Associated Naval Architects. In his spare time he refereed many basketball games in the Portsmouth area and enjoyed golf. Until ill health curtailed his activities, he also enjoyed meeting fellow veterans at Bingo gatherings, traveling with his wife and children on cruises, and general visiting with various family members, for whom he was always a most kind and generous father, grandfather, grandfather, uncle, brother-in-law and brother.

Survivors include his children; Kathleen Paul Andraso, John Leary, Patricia

Ann Peter Blake, Eileen Conway, Linda Ron Widener, Oswald B. Laura Smithwick Jr.; a sister, Maxine Leary; sisters-in-law, Sophie Cornelius Leary, Katie Louis Leary, Diane Gerald Leary, Mozell Gary Goodman, and Pansey Ronnie Sells; a brother-in-law, Bobbie Marlene Kepley. He is also survived by many nephews, nieces, grandchildren.

Mr. Leary was predeceased by his parents; his wife, Barbara Haughom; his wife Elsie Smithwick; his son, James Michael; his daughter Nora Elizabeth Leary Lawson; grandson, Walter Widener; four brothers: Cornelius, Patrick, Louis, and Gerald; four sisters and three brothers-in-law, Catherine Ross Frye, Christina Leary, Ellen Donald Gero, and Elizabeth Raymond Shepard; grandchildren; nieces; nephews and other devoted family members. A funeral service will be held at 2 p.m. Friday November 25th in Loving Funeral Home, Churchland Chapel, by the Rev. Jarek. Interment will follow at Forest Lawn Cemetery 8100 Granby Street Norfolk with Full Military Honors. The family will receive friends in the funeral home Friday from 1 to 2 p.m.

Tribute Wall



“ I remember right after I started my Navy career, Uncle Bumps would have me over to his house, and it made being away from home that much easier. I was, and still am, proud that I had the honor of being a Navy Chief, just like him. I'm glad that he got to meet my grandsons before he passed - 2 words - "the deer"! RIP Chief!##imported-begin##Steve Shepard##imported-end##

December 02, 2011 at 12:00 AM



“ I remember many good times with my Uncle Bumps on Staten Island when he was stationed in the Navy in Bayonne, NJ. He would come and have Saturday night dinner with us. He helped with the painting of our house. I also remember fun times with him and Aunt Barbara and then Aunt Marie in Virginia. A few years ago, my sister, Joan, and our daughters met him for breakfast at the Waffle House. Our daughters got to see his wit and kindness. I miss you, Uncle Bumps. Love, Patsy##imported-begin##Patricia Leary Stepanovic##imported-end##

November 30, 2011 at 12:00 AM



“ My family and I extend our deepest condolences to Uncle Bumps' family. He truly was one of a kind and will be missed dearly. I can recall numerous occasions where he and Marie welcomed myself and fellow soldiers into their home when we had weekend furloughs. He was my favorite uncle. God bless.##imported-begin##John Leary##imported-end##

November 28, 2011 at 12:00 AM



“ My prayer are with all of you. BJ was such a special person. He dearly loved his family. He'll be greatly missed.
Love, Sally##imported-begin##Sarah E Goodman##imported-end##

November 25, 2011 at 12:00 AM



“ Uncle BJ was a very special man and will be missed. He always had a quick wit and caring soul, may he rest in peace. Our heartfelt & deepest sympathy to the family.##imported-begin##Candice & Will Chick##imported-end##

November 25, 2011 at 12:00 AM



“ Uncle BJ was so good to our family. He would always make you laugh and smile when he was around you. That is a memory will always remain with me. God Bless Him.
The Peregory Family##imported-begin##Randy Peregory##imported-end##

November 25, 2011 at 12:00 AM



“ Ozzie and Family,
Please know that you, Laura, and all of BJ's family are in my thoughts and prayers at this time. Hope to be able to be with you on Friday , if not, know my thoughts are there.
Jessica Moore##imported-begin##Jessica Moore##imported-end##

November 24, 2011 at 12:00 AM



“ Too all of the family, we are very sorry for your loss, please know that everyone is in our prayers. We loved BJ very much, he was a very special person and loved by everyone that knew him.##imported-begin##Bobby&Marlene Kepley##imported-end##

November 24, 2011 at 12:00 AM