



Ronald McKay Buller

September 22, 1925 - July 21, 2018

Traverse City will be missing one of its greatest Navy pilots and flight instructors. Our loving father, Ronald McKay Buller, passed away peacefully on July 21, 2018. He had a long and wonderful life. Ron was the third son of Mildred and Robert Buller born September 22nd, 1925 in Acme. Growing up he attended schools in Interlochen and Traverse City. After graduating from Traverse City High School in 1943, Ron enlisted in the Navy and dreamed of becoming a pilot. He earned his wings and was commissioned as a Navy pilot in 1946 in Corpus Christi, TX, after attending several flight schools. He served in the Navy for 23 years and was stationed mostly at Naval Air Stations in California. While stationed at Alameda Naval Air Station, he met and married Marcella Goldman in 1948. They had four children; Dave, Steve, Teri Jones, and Sue Austin, raising them in Alameda, Pensacola, San Diego, Coronado, and Fremont. One of his claims to fame was breaking the sound barrier (1.2 Mach) in a F9-8T Crusader jet while he was a Lieutenant Commander in 1961. He earned his Mach 1.6 pin in a Crusader before retiring in 1966. One of his most daring and exciting flights was flying his F8F Bearcat under the Deception Pass Bridge at Whidbey Island, Washington, in 1948. Even fifty years since he piloted an aircraft, Ron still spoke adamantly and fondly about the joys of flying and how much he loved and missed it.

Ron's second career after retiring from the Navy was in banking. He joined Crocker Bank and was promoted quickly as the bank manager at the main downtown branch in Hayward, CA. When his wife passed away in 1976, he decided to return to Traverse City. He joined the Elks Lodge and became their treasurer. He met a wonderful, witty woman, Jane Kildee. They married in 1980 and Jane's children; Susie Janis, Patrick, Sandy Lindstrom, Lisa Lempke and Bill joined the blended family. Ron and Jane enjoyed traveling, bridge, and entertaining friends. Ron loved fishing in West Bay when the salmon were in. Ron was always impeccably dressed no matter what the occasion and always had an optimistic personality that will be sorely missed by all who were lucky enough to know him.

Ron was preceded in death by his brothers; Ray, Dick, and Roger and grand-children Daniel Johnson and Julie Janis Finch. Ron is survived by his wife of 38 years, Jane, 9 children, 16 grandchildren, and 11 great grandchildren.

A memorial service honoring Ron will take place at 11:00 a.m., with visitation one hour prior, on Thursday, August 16, 2018 at Grace Episcopal Church, 341 Washington St. Traverse City, MI 49684. The Rev. Kathryn Costas will officiate.

In Lieu of flowers memorial gifts can be made to The Northwest Michigan Jesus Ministry, P.O Box 1408 Traverse City, MI 49685.

Comments



“ Dear Jane, I was saddened to learn of Ron's death. It is hard to recognize how long he was ill. You are both in my thoughts and prayers.
Adam Gahn

Adam Gahn - July 29, 2018 at 04:18 PM



“ So sorry to hear this! Ron was always so positive and upbeat, he will be greatly missed here at VIP HAIR DESIGN. Blessings to The family.
Kathy

Kathryne Newberry - July 28, 2018 at 11:54 AM



“ One of my favorite memories of Ron...we were invited to watch the Blue Angels from his step-daughter Susie and Bill's condo on front street. I don't think the view is better anywhere else, actually felt like they were too close, like you could see into the plane. It was a blue sky kind of day, sunny with a gentle breeze. Ron shared some of his flying experiences before the show started but when it did...he was at attention. You could see the joy of memories and even the desire to fly again in his eyes. But as much as he loved flying I am sure he loved Jane even more! They were love birds...many pictures of them kissing were posted to FB. Isn't that wonderful? They were a team inspiring all of us to love better. We will miss you, Ron. To the entire blended family..hold on to your memories and share them often.

Kathy A. Schutter - July 27, 2018 at 11:51 PM



“ My life was blessed in more ways that I probably know, that my Gpandpa Ron was in my life! He was kind, smart, loving, passionate and boy his laugh and smile were warming to anyone's heart! He always showed you how he appreciated seeing you and that he loves you! I will miss you grandpa so very much! Thank you for gracing me with your heart and letting me watch you poke yourself when you needed your medicine and it was just the most amazing thing to me:) Love Janie

Jane Bezotte - July 27, 2018 at 08:15 PM



“ Truly Ron was a blessing to all who knew him. After reading about him, we now know what a gift he was to his family, friends, the Traverse City area, and our nation. Thank God for people like him.

Marilyn Lempke Bright - July 27, 2018 at 07:42 PM



“ My life is more blessed because of Ron and Jane. Two of the most loving couples I have ever met. They were so cute and cared so deeply for each other. I will miss the twinkle in his eye when he was joking with me. Much love and hugs to all of you that morn the loss and celebrate the life of this amazing man.

Kim Berthelsen - July 27, 2018 at 01:04 PM



“ I met Ron when I was 16 years old and working at the Elks Lodge, his humor and kindness made the world a better place. Deepest sympathies to the families

Leo Johnson - July 30, 2018 at 11:40 AM