



Eugene Ernest

Gene Ernest was known as many things – Navy vet, business manager, husband, father and grandfather; sailor, golfer, bowler, runner, biker, paddle sportsman, camper, competitive swimmer, community volunteer and more. But most people knew him as Captain Gene.

Gene took his final voyage Dec. 18th, dying in Rockport surrounded by family members following a very brief illness.

Eugene Ernest was born May 26, 1931, the eldest child of Charles E. and Alva (Holgren) Ernest, in Hackensack, N.J. He grew up in the Bronx and later in Staten Island's West Brighton neighborhood, graduating from Curtis High School; and joined the Navy in 1951.

Following his four-year service, he took advantage of the G.I. bill to earn both a bachelor's and master's degree in business administration at night school, while working full-time and raising a family.

Gene married Carlyn Young, a registered nurse, in 1956, living first in her hometown of Tottenville, Staten Island, and then moving to Cranbury, N.J.

Gene's business career took him from Mobil Oil to Baxter Laboratories/Wallerstein Division and finally to Rutgers University, where he served as Director of Business Affairs for Cook College, the university's "ag school."

During these years, the couple and their three daughters camped, hiked, canoed and took up cross-country skiing, all of which came in handy when the Ernests bought a camp on Coleman Pond in Lincolnville. Gene and Carlyn organized an Outing Club that capped every year with Christmas caroling around Cranbury, ending with an ornament-making party at the Ernest home.

In retirement, Gene and Carlyn traveled overseas; and lived for a time in Belle Isle, S.C., and also in Camden. During these years, Gene appeared as an extra in two major motion pictures. In 1998, the couple bought a house on Ripley's Creek in Tenants Harbor, where they lived until moving into an independent apartment at Quarry Hill a couple of years ago.

Throughout his life, Gene was devoted to family, proud of his daughters and grandchildren; organizing reunions that brought together siblings, cousins and grandchildren from around the country; and dancing the night away at their weddings.

He was physically active and always up for a new challenge, including a memorable windsurfing stint and years of winning performances in the local YMCA's U.S. Masters Swimming program.

The month of his 89th birthday, he completed a 5K on the Anderson Inn treadmill. In earlier years, he was a regular participant in local road races; and he could be found during more recent summer nights playing "glow golf" at the Union Country Club.

Most of all, he loved being on the water, preferably under sail but also for a while as holder of a "6-pack" Coast Guard motorized vessel license, giving tours aboard the *Quoddy Belle*.

A lifelong Democrat, Gene was a veteran for peace in deed, if not membership. In recent years, he marched with the Midcoast Peace and Justice group and took part in the annual Veterans Day program at the American Legion Hall in Camden.

He also contributed spot-news photos to the Courier-Gazette, landing large on the front page more than once.

Gene was predeceased by siblings Elsie and John. He is survived by Carlyn, his wife of 64 years; daughters Dagny (Bill Eberle) of Thomaston, Melissa Aul (Jerry) of Rice Lake, Wis., and Kristé (Ron Smith) of Rockland; brother Don of Smyrna, Del.; brother-in-law John Young of Camden; grandchildren Dr. Allison Saiz (Augustine), Dr. Bryce Aul (Andrea) and Alayna Pollis (Ben); and a number of nephews and nieces.

Arrangements are by Riposta Funeral Home/Direct Cremation of Maine. There will be no service. Donations in Captain Gene's honor may be sent to the St. George Community Sailing Foundation (stgeorgesail.org); or to the St. George Volunteer Firefighters' and Ambulance Association (st.georgemaine.com).