



Commander Larry J. McNeely

April 17, 1944 - May 5, 2016

Commander Larry J. McNeely, age 72, died Thursday, May 5, 2016 at Hubbard Hospice House West, South Charleston, after a long illness.

Born April 17, 1944 in Kanawha County, Larry was the only child to Orlie and Pauline McNeely.

Larry is survived by his wife, Shirley McNeely, three children: Jessica McNeely, Gregory McNeely, and Natalie McNeely, (their spouses) and his grandson Jackson McNeely.

Larry attended West Virginia State College as a member of State College's choir he met the love of his life, Shirley Firebaugh, who stood by his side in marriage for 50 years. Larry joined the service and served his country honorably for 26 years with distinction. He was a veteran of the Vietnam War, where he earned several medals, including the Purple Heart, Bronze Star, Order of the Palm, and V for Valor. He was wounded in battle in Vietnam's Mekong Delta and received other commendations for his dedication and bravery. The discipline and patriotism he learned in the Navy never left him, as friends and family will attest.

"When we leave this world, we give up all our possessions and our memories. Love is the only thing we take with us. It is all we carry from one life to the next". --- Lang Leav

“Death is a wild night and a new road” --- Emily Dickinson

Private services were held Sunday May 8, 2016 at 1:00 pm at Chapman Funeral Home Hurricane, and he was interred in a plot at Beech Grove Cemetery in Eleanor. His name was honored by James Marshall Post #187 in Winfield with the traditional playing of TAPS and the 21 gun salute.

Anyone wishing to leave an online condolence or memory may do so at: www.chapmanfuneralhomes.com.

Chapman Funeral Home, 3941 Teays Valley Road, Hurricane WV is honored to be serving the McNeely family.

Tribute Wall



“ *Commander Larry J. McNeely*

October 06, 2023 at 08:41 AM

DG

“ I just learned of Larry's passing yesterday and am deeply saddened. My heartfelt sympathies to Shirley and the children.

Larry and I served together in the USS EL PASO wardroom during Vietnam. This was after his service "in country" and during the time at which he and Shirley were blessed with the birth of their first child.

Larry was a fine athlete, a brave man, a patriot, supremely modest and an all around great guy. Of a wardroom of 25 to 30 officers at any given time, he was one of a very few to be universally liked by everybody. Besides serving as First Lieutenant (officer in charge of boats--a big job on an amphibious ship) he voluntarily served as lay minister for the Protestant services and the ship's librarian.

I once asked him about the circumstances surrounding his Purple Heart. Typically, he just laughed it off as no big deal.

Larry went to W. Va. State University on a baseball scholarship as a pitcher. He told me that, without the scholarship, he would not have been able to afford to go to college. He was a self made man in every respect.

I will always remember the night in 1972 when my parents were visiting and came aboard the ship for dinner one night when I had the duty. Larry was in the same duty section and was especially attentive to my parents that evening...nothing unusual for him but something I really appreciated. He and my late father were both pipe smokers then and Larry delighted my father by offering to share his pipe tobacco, something Dad enjoyed greatly.

Larry was a truly fine man in every respect and I grieve at his passing.

*Don Graeter
Louisville, KY*

Don Graeter - November 14, 2016 at 03:48 PM

JP

“ *Jennifer Perry lit a candle in memory of Commander Larry J. McNeely*



jennifer perry - May 23, 2016 at 06:02 PM

GA

“ *I share this great loss you Shirley and the children. The memories of our childhood into our adult life include both our families. Though the physical distance for several years has been great I have thought of all of you often.*

A lot of people thought we were brothers and indeed he called himself my friend and defender. I have missed him in life and will miss him more in his death.

My prayers now are for your comfort and well being.

*Gary Adkins
107 Westminister Dr.
Simpsonville, SC 29681
864 967- 4270*

Gary Adkins - May 22, 2016 at 02:31 PM

DF

“ *Shirley and Family,
We were very sorry to learn of the passing of Larry. Aunt Patty called to let us know, but she had no contact information. She now lives in Boston. Her cell is 304-206-5444
We are in Sissonville. If we can do anything to help you guys in any way, please let us know. Dave & Elaine Fierbaugh. 304-984-1566*

Dave Fierbaugh - May 21, 2016 at 08:39 PM

NM

“ Natalie Mcneely lit a candle in memory of
Commander Larry J. McNeely



natalie mcneely - May 21, 2016 at 06:13 PM

LI

“ Larry always took the time to sit and visit a while and share a story. Even on days when he probably didn't feel well he always took the time. At the end of every visit he was always sure to ask me how things were going and if I was happy. He had a great heart. He told me to always keep my smile shining, I will miss those visits, but will rock and think of him and smile.

Libby - May 21, 2016 at 09:16 AM

KR

“ It is difficult to choose just one....
Larry cared so deeply about people, he was a gifted story teller and a gifted listener.
Larry's strength of character shone through, he was The Commander always. He wanted the best for his "troops". Larry made a special lock for the sliding glass door on our deck. Even before he left this earth I would often smile to myself and whisper in my thought good night, sleep tight Larry, we are safe. He wanted everyone he loved to be safe and happy and prosperous to their greatest potential. I count it as one of the greatest privileges in my life to have known and loved Larry as a friend. Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote "...to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived, This is to have succeeded! " Larry did succeed.

Kay Roberts - May 21, 2016 at 06:48 AM

AH

“ Please accept my deepest sympathies.
Arvyl Hypes, class of 1962 SAHS

Arvyl Hypes - May 20, 2016 at 02:54 PM

KE

“ The McNeely's were our neighbors for many years and I also had the privilege to work for "Mac" at the turnpike. He was a great man and a great boss who impacted many lives. So sorry to all of you for your loss. Katy Lenhart-England

Katy England - May 20, 2016 at 02:31 PM

MB

“ I was a golf buddy of Larrys for years and enjoyed every minute i spent with him through those years. Larry was a unique individual that will be greatly missed by those that knew him. Rest in peace good body we will miss you.

Mike Barnett - May 20, 2016 at 10:04 AM