



Lewis Earl Leininger

June 9, 1924 - August 28, 2019

Lewis Earl Stanley Leininger, AKA Louie, age 95, of Wenatchee, WA, passed through this life on August 28, 2019. He was born on June 9, 1924, in Lebanon, PA, to Earl Henry Leininger and Alice Grace Weaber. He had three brothers: Leroy Henry Leininger, died at birth 1925, Gerald Lloyd Leininger, died in 1926, and Richard Lester Leininger, died in 1947; all children were born in Lebanon, PA.

He enlisted in the U.S. Navy in Philadelphia, PA, in 1940, and was assigned to the U.S. Navy Training Station, Newport, RI, for boot camp. He was assigned to the U.S.S. North Carolina (BB55) in 1941, and was part of the commissioning crew, an elite group of 2,000 men known as "plank owners" of the U.S.S. North Carolina. He was the last living plank owner. The ship was ordered to the Pacific to join the war against Japan, then transitioned to the Panama Canal and arrived in Pearl Harbor. The U.S.S. Carolina also served as a screening unit for the landings on Guadalcanal and Tulagi. He continued his Navy service until December 6, 1946, and was honorably discharged, as Chief Machinist's Mate, at the U.S. Naval Air Station, Alameda, CA.

He married Mabel Jewell and three children were born in Wenatchee, WA. The family moved to Moses Lake, WA, where they raised their children. He worked for the Teamsters Union 760 and held leadership roles in the community. To name a few, boat club, Shriners, Masons, Elks and was also

involved in politics.

He authored a book about wooden box crates that groceries use to be packed in. It was a very large collection. The Smithsonian Institution requested the collection and he was invited to the White House and presented a medal. He was multi-talented and also won awards for his photography. He was an avid golfer and played golf until a year ago. He excelled at everything he ever tried.

He was preceded in death by his parents; three brothers; his wives: Mabel Winifred (Jewell) Leininger, in 1992, of Kansas City, MO, and Caroline R. (Page) Leininger, in 2011, of Wenatchee WA, to include one grandchild, Gary Lee Helton, in 1971, of Moses Lake, WA. He is survived by his son, Richard Charles Leininger of Moses Lake, WA; and two daughters: Julie Marie Joy Leininger (Fishback) and husband, Jack, of Sierra Vista, AZ, and Nancy Jeanne Leininger (Downs) of Pineville, NC; eight grandchildren: Kellie Marie Lufkin (Breedon) of New York, Brent Alan Lufkin in Turkey, Gina Michelle Leininger (Dress) and husband, Bill, in Washington, Mike Shawn Leininger and wife, Leisa, in Washington, Richard Bradley Leininger and wife, Shanna, in Washington, Andrea Jeanne Downs (Sauer) and husband, Charles, in Virginia, Tracey Rebecca Newman (Downs) and husband, Brian, in North Carolina, Jeffrey Lewis Downs in Missouri; 16 great-grandchildren; and three great-great-grandchildren. There are nephews and nieces located in California, Washington, and Pennsylvania.

A Military/Honor Guard Memorial will be held on September 16, 2019, at 11:30 a.m., at the Tahoma National Cemetery. His ashes will be placed in a reserved vault with urns of Caroline Leininger and his beloved cat, Harry. In lieu of flowers, you may send donations to: The Friends of the Battleship, North Carolina, P.O. Box 480, Wilmington, NC, 28402. Please note "Generations Campaign" on the check memo line or visit the U.S.S. North Carolina web site for donation.

His family members take comfort that he is in God's loving arms and will only experience joy now. His life has blessed all who knew him.